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THE

TRAGEDY OF LIFE:

BEING RECORDS OF

REMARKABLE PHASES OF LUNACY,

KEPT BY A PHYSICIAN.

BY JOHN H. BRENTEN.

OUR towns and cities are but so many dwellings of human misery, in which grief and sorrow, innumerable troubles, labours of mortal men, and all manner of vices, are included as in so many pens. Our villages are like molehills, and men as so many emmets, busy, busy, still going to and fro, in and out, crossing one another's projects, as the lines of several sea cards cut each other in a map. Now light and merry, by and by sorrowful and heavy; now hoping, then distrusting; now patient, to-morrow crying out; now pale, then red, running, sitting, trembling, sweating, halting, &c.—BURTON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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THE TRAGEDY OF LIFE.

MAD OR NOT MAD?

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE RECTOR LIVED AND HOW HE DIED.

“ON the 20th of last month, at the Rectory, much respected, the Rev. Louis Lackingham, aged 67, for many years Rector of Basset cum Wintleton”—When I was a boy, I used often to run my eye over the announcement of deaths in the columns of *The Times*, and consider with myself, in a desultory fashion, which of the various deceased parties were most to have been envied in their respective lives, and, in the case of an enforced exchange between their position

and my own, which among them all I should have preferred. At first sight, that of the Rev. Louis Lackingham seems one that few men would have declined; the much respected rector of a large, opulent, and agricultural parish, to whom the *Clergy List* assigned an income of rather over 2,000*l.* per annum. In those days our clergymen were almost invariably men of good family and university education, and such a prize was not a *rara avis*; but now, when district churches are springing, up and pew-rents, the voluntary system, and short cuts into holy orders, are superseding the ancient ways, these good things are becoming each day more scarce. Probably there was greediness, unscrupulousness, and time-serving among some of the clergy. But let us do justice to the old times: human nature is still the same—the thing which has been is that which shall be: we shall not the less have greediness and unscrupulousness in the hundred candidates for an episcopal chapel, the income of which is made up of pew-rents, and cannot by any exertion be worked into 500*l.* per annum;

but it is a lower, and consequently a more numerous, class that furnishes the competitors.

Louis Lackingham, in the first instance a Winchester scholar, was, at the age of nineteen, transferred to Oxford. He was well-born, good-looking, possessed great natural gifts of pleasing, and being early left an orphan, he had never experienced the wholesome restraint of parental control. His guardian informed him that in six more years he would be sole master of 12,000*l.*, and recommended the Church as a gentlemanly profession. Neither the information nor the suggestion was thrown away. He adopted the clerical vocation, and proceeded to spend his money in advance: first, the university tradesmen, the tailors, tobacconists, pastry-cooks, jewellers, and livery-stable keepers,—and, secondly, the children of Israel,—became his creditors; so that long before he had taken his degree, what with the legal debts of the first, and the usurious loans of the last, he owed very nearly as much as he would receive two years from that time.

At length the moment of departure came, and for once he looked his affairs in the face; the result of the experiment was such a shock that for the rest of his life he never repeated the operation. "If only Lackingham would look his affairs in the face!" said one of his friends. "Yes; but he won't," replied a practical junior, "and you can no more make a man look, than you can make him drink."

So when he took his degree, he retired from the university as quietly as possible, giving such promises to his creditors as were best calculated to appease for the moment, and procured a title to holy orders in the shape of a curacy at a very secluded village in the most out-of-the-way part of Cornwall; where, for the space of one year, he gathered health and strength, and certainly spent little or nothing.

When the control of his guardian ceased, and the money was made over to him, he did what he considered best under the circumstances: he paid as little of it away as possible, and indeed only silenced a few of the most clamorous. He

then proceeded to conclude an engagement as travelling tutor to a nobleman, and for the next ten years the Rev. Louis Lackingham, in this capacity, and in other succeeding ones of the like nature, improved his knowledge of foreign languages and human nature, and added greater polish to an address naturally courtly and refined. He did not rebuke sin by any austerity of demeanour either in public or private; and was popular, consequently, with both men and women: he was discreet also, and a good listener, so that few guests were more welcome in polite society.

About this time, to his surprise, and I am not quite sure that it was to his gratification, he was presented to a fashionable curacy in the West End of London: I use the expression “was presented,” designedly, for it best expresses the operation, as far as he was concerned. It was one of those places where a diminution of popularity is very decidedly followed by a falling off of income. He was at this period thirty-four years of age, and in appearance an eminently

handsome and distinguished looking man. His hair grew far back on the head, giving a semblance of greater benevolence and breadth to the upper regions than rightfully belonged to them; he had clearly defined eyebrows, a full purple-gray eye, a well-cut nose, and a mouth and lips which his best friends admitted to be somewhat sensual and pleasure-loving in expression. He did not possess that first requisite of a town clergyman, the gift of eloquent discourse; but what his intellect or moral weight failed to hold, was won by his courteous manners and fine person; and if it may be said without scandal, wealthy widows and enterprising spinsters soon formed an obtrusively prominent portion of his congregation. Any conspiracy, however, entered into by these ladies against his celibate state was fated to fail; and the marriage of the Rev. Louis Lackingham to a very young lady of good family, considerable beauty, and an heiress in her own right, was not only duly announced, but solemnized with the pomp usual on these occasions.

Whether it were that perfect faith is due to

the clerical character, or that it was owing to the loyal and uncompromising trust of woman, or to the imbecility or carelessness of the guardians, cannot be accurately known; but so it was that the settlements made at the time were hardly worthy of the name, unless, indeed, they were made with an express view to future insolvency. Neither Louis nor his wife relished his present position very much; she had no violent taste for making herself acceptable to his congregation, and the female division of his audience had lost their relish for the sight of their handsome pastor, since the date of his marriage. The cure of souls was, therefore, resigned, and the newly married couple repaired to the Continent, where the husband had the opportunity of giving lessons to his wife in many things in which he was a proficient; though in the art of throwing away money she appeared to stand in need of little or no instruction.

For about three years they followed the devices of their own hearts, and spared themselves no pleasure or luxury which their tastes or appetites

desired, using their capital in all respects with as little scruple as if it were income. At the end of this period, the connections of his wife procured for him—and it was again without solicitation on his part—the rectory of Basset cum Wintleton; and the prize, of which many a poor clergyman had dreamed by night and prayed for by day, fell like a ripe pear into the hands of one who was too indolent to ask for it. However, it was accepted without any misgiving, and with an utter absence of any solemn feeling of responsibility.

The new rector and his wife, having experienced the charms of unlimited continental gaiety, now essayed the effects of country dissipation. They were well received by the neighbouring gentry. Louis had not run into debt at Oxford, and figured as the tutor to sundry young noblemen, without acquiring knowledge and accomplishments of a certain kind. He rode well to hounds, though in a quiet way, and by no means in scarlet. But then he had excellent horses, and plenty of them; and though

he persisted, with a pleasant smile, in calling them hacks, or cobs, they were very undeniable hunters — lengthy, deep-chested, clean-limbed animals, with as much bone as any horse need have, and to spare. He kept a first-rate cook, gave numerous dinners and choice wine, and received invitations in return. In a couple of years bills began to pour in; at first slowly, then with an ominous rapidity. They were settled or not, according to the humour of the moment, when they were presented, or the degree of importunity with which they were urged. But the rector smiled on, and his wife also, and, seeing them smile, the world consented to do the same.

Within a few months, while money was thus poured recklessly out, a change was at hand, and a sudden gloom spread over the rectory: Mrs. Lackingham became ill—very ill—then dangerously ill. I would not say that the rector continued to present as gay a face to the world, for he was essentially a kind-hearted man; but at least his equanimity never forsook him. He had excellent health and a good digestion; and

when poor Mrs. Lackingham died, he bore up much better than could have been expected: at least, so everybody said; and not a few young ladies would have been too glad to console a larger amount of grief than that which he displayed. He had, in reality, even more fortitude than society gave him credit for, since he became aware, or at least was made so by his lawyers, that he had completely muddled away a sum of 30,000*l.*, the fortune of his late wife, and had henceforth nothing but his clerical income to look to. Only 2,000*l.* a year! A cloud passed over his handsome face as he thought of it, and his college bills were not all settled yet.

So once more he went abroad—for retirement, he told his friends—for retrenchment, he said to his man of business. Why should he not amuse himself, he thought. Though he had nearly lived the half-century, he was still well able to do that much.

In those days, prolonged absence from parish duty was not an unpardonable offence, and a

liberal furlough was easily obtained from a bishop, who happened also to be his particular friend. And again Louis Lackingham enjoyed himself; perhaps more sedately, but still self-indulgence was the only light which guided him in his steps.

The two legal gentlemen whom he had selected for the honour of setting his affairs in order, talked him over a little.

“Parsons are odd birds, *we* know, sometimes,” said one to the other; “but what Louis Lackingham can have done with that 30,000*l.*—how he has muddled it—whether he has hidden it, or sunk it—is what I cannot guess.”

“He has shaken the dice-box once too often over the water, I take it,” replied the one addressed.

“Hum! Is that so?” replied the other. “Then he has gone to try his luck again. I never knew one drink quench that sort of thirst.”

Years rolled away, and people had ceased to wonder when the rector would return. He, however, did reappear; but it was with a wife: very much, I believe, to every one’s disgust.

However, he met all inquiries with his usual bland affability: "Yes, he had been fortunate enough to engage the affections of Mrs. St. Maur, a lady of excellent family and connections." And he was, or affected to be, quite wrapped up in her. This much was ascertained by the perseverance of female curiosity, that she was a widow when he first encountered her at Homberg.

This account was hardly satisfactory to the old county families; perhaps it was, not unnaturally, the reverse. The new Mrs. Lackingham was not one of them; and to a certain extent they carried out their first intention of letting her know that at such an angle they meant to view the fact. (This cabal, I ought to say, existed only among the members of her own sex.)

However, Mrs. St. Maur was a thorough woman of the world long before she became Mrs. Lackingham: perhaps that she was so, had been one reason for her marriage; so, whatever she felt, she kept to herself. She was affable to their haughtiness, deaf to their sarcasm, blind

to their coldness, and presented an imperturbably polished and suave demeanour to all they did, said, and looked. I say *looked*, because this species of artillery is not the least formidable instrument of feminine aggressive warfare. She was a first-rate actress: *that* was not the smallest of her special endowments. If on well-timed occasions she wore a slightly distressed or surprised air, it was almost imperceptible, and was instantly suppressed, and replaced by her ordinary ingratiating deportment. By degrees, therefore, she was allowed to suppose herself forgiven, and all visible demonstration of hostilities ceased. Louis Lackingham was all right with his bishop, and there was no official declaration to proclaim that he was all wrong with his creditors; the rectory *cuisine* was perfect, the dinners well assorted, the household was well and liberally appointed: what could they ask for more?

But a change gradually appeared in the rector: he became dull, uneasy, and irritable; his little compliments and well-turned sentences were no longer delivered with the ease of old; the pleasures

of the table seemed to have lost their power, the best wine its flavour ; nay, the very expression of his countenance was changed. The family doctor was called in, and looked grave ; but, excepting that he counselled rest and entire abstinence from all intellectual pursuits, mental anxiety, and excitement of any description, he did not do much. Probably the Rev. Louis hardly knew what to make of this advice, since he had never, so long as the memory of man served, suffered anything to excite or worry him, whether intellectual or otherwise. He therefore did as he had been accustomed to do, and they continued to live easily and pleasantly at the rate of 4,000*l.* per annum.

But one day the black cloud broke ; and a stroke of paralysis laid him prostrate. He rallied, physically speaking, to a certain extent, but his mind had been more surely stricken ; and for the rest of his life he was doomed to be a garrulous old man, wheeled about in an arm-chair, and left a good deal in private to the care of his servants.

At first, after a decent lapse of time, Mrs. Lackingham signified her intention of visiting and receiving guests as usual ; but the spectacle of poor Lackingham, with his distorted face and unmeaning, half-formed words, wheeled in like an aged imbecile to preside nominally over his own table, was one too painful to be borne, and Mrs. Lackingham was given unmistakably to understand that this line of conduct would not do. So, with great philosophy, she betook herself to that retirement which is so acceptable when we are tired of the world or the world is tired of us, and in so doing contrived to be thought exemplary rather than otherwise. Then unpleasant rumours floated about ; strange-looking men were reported to have been seen on the premises ; horses were sold, and several domestics dismissed.

At length the truth, long looming, burst forth ; and it was made public that the rector was, and had for some time been, hopelessly insolvent. Not the least fortunate part of the matter was his utter incapability of assisting himself or of com-

prehending the painful position in which he was placed. A meeting of his creditors was held, and the result was that his living was sequestered for their benefit; a certain liberal portion being set aside for his maintenance. Half the house was shut up; a curate agreed, for the consideration of a slender salary, to occupy the vacant pulpit; and, if his life had been prolonged for a few years longer, Louis Lackingham might again have been a free man; but this was not permitted, and the announcement alluded to at the commencement of my tale met the eyes of the readers of the provincial papers. So the rectory windows were darkened; and the well-bred, if not very warm-hearted inquirers after Mrs. Lackingham, were told "that she was confined to her bed, and was much overcome."

The living was quickly bestowed on another. The rector was dead! Long live the rector! But this gentleman, being unmarried, courteously informed the widow that for the month she was at liberty to retain possession of the house. Now the dilapidations were as extensive as the debts

were numerous, and people were good enough to spend much time in wondering what would happen, and devising schemes whereby both might be successfully disposed of.

In the midst of these complications the world was surprised to learn that the lady in question had a daughter by a previous marriage ; that this daughter had already arrived at the rectory to “console her mother in the hour of affliction,” as Mrs. Lackingham put it ; and furthermore, rumour affirmed that Miss St. Maur was a very lovely girl. The first part of this report was quickly ascertained to be correct ; the second was doubted by many, and believed by a few, who, however, only saw in it a fresh matter for aggravation. What business had Mrs. Lackingham at all with a daughter unknown to them ? Why was she not produced during her late husband’s lifetime ? What guarantee had they that Mrs. Lackingham had ever been a Mrs. St. Maur at all, or that this young woman *was* her daughter ? “The St. Maurs of —shire I know, and the St. Maurs of —shire I know ;

but who are these?" demanded a free-spoken, hard-headed old gentlewoman; and receiving no reply, either satisfactory or otherwise, she black-balled them in her own mind, and advised a good many others to do the same.

The *religio loci* had been outraged, and it was felt that circumstances required a victim. That Mrs. Lackingham should take advantage of the new rector's polite permission to prolong her stay, was supposed to signify that both the mother and daughter were preparing to reward his unsuspecting kindness by treacherously inveigling him into matrimony. No real fear was, however, entertained on this head by those who knew him.

Mr. Edgecombe was one of those complete specimens of the old school which are still extant: a kindly-disposed man; a high Tory; an attested *bon vivant*, and a confirmed celibate; a sayer of good things; and possessing that universal gallantry, which the opposite sex affirm to be so insincere and unproductive. No; it was felt that *he* could defend himself; and no

measures of protection were devised in his behalf. But as the dowagers talked over these things in their drawing-rooms, those among them who had sons were filled with apprehension, and they resolved with one accord to eschew all intercourse, and to keep the young men under their own eye, until such time as these women should have departed from among them. This was, perhaps, hardly fair, for it was all mere supposition; no actual proof of evil intention could be proved. But their disgust rose to its height when Miss St. Maur appeared in the rectory pew attended by a servant; she was in deep mourning and closely veiled, it is true, but a quantity of magnificent fair-coloured, silky hair, fell in a net beneath her bonnet, so as to be visible to all beholders, and it was thought to be an omen of dangerous beauty.

Meanwhile, the winding-up of affairs proceeded; the creditors took all there was, amounting to about one-third of what they actually claimed, and then agreed to sign their acquittance in full, well convinced that not another shilling

was forthcoming. Finally, Mrs. Lackingham, looking worn and pale indeed, but gentle and suave as ever, emerged from her seclusion, and took up her abode in a pretty little cottage in the neighbourhood. The lines of defence were then immediately strengthened: the gentry called on her, but they did not do so cordially, or with any visible intention of promoting intimacy; and when the visit was returned, the same distant and distrustful thought was felt, if not expressed in so many words.

Women have an instinct in these things; and Mrs. Lackingham probably did not see her way to anything pleasant by remaining longer. She was not in a position to punish her adversaries, or she would gladly have done it: she could not, indeed, even rebel with success; so she preserved the equanimity of her temper, and began to meditate flight. In a month she vacated her cottage, and, with her daughter, departed from the hostile camp, leaving a few trifling debts unpaid: of which it is a fact creditable to the kindness of the tradespeople that she never

heard more. In this matter they appeared in advantageous contrast with the class above them. But then, it may be said, they had less at stake: it is one thing to lose ten pounds, and it is another thing to lose your son, or, what amounts to the same thing, accept a daughter-in-law whom your heart abominates.

CHAPTER II.

THE COMFORTS OF A HOME, WITH MUSICAL SOCIETY.

MRS. LACKINGHAM and her daughter migrated to London, and having hired a fairly-sized house in one of the squares in the north-west part, which make pretensions to gentility, if not fashion (this was easily obtained by means of negotiating from the Rectory of Basset-cum-Wintleton), mother and daughter settled down, with some furniture taken on credit, four letters of introduction, and a few dozen of very fine old wine, which had in some mysterious manner escaped the grasp of the creditors; and in due time an advertisement appeared in the papers, setting forth that “the widow of a clergyman offered to any lady or gentleman the comforts of a home,” &c.

In our crowded land, with its struggling

myriads, the means of subsistence are daily growing more difficult to procure, and when the masses are concentrated the strife begins in earnest. The fear of poverty and the lust of wealth engender a fierce, desperate pitilessness, so that no individual voice is heard: the single cry is drowned in the surging roar of the million; the wheel grinds on, careless of what may be crushed; the strong brave it, the weak go to the wall, and if they fall, their life is soon trampled out of them. Carlyle has well expressed it. Man says to his fellow: "See, thou art taking more than thy share of happiness in the world—something from my share—which, by the Heavens, thou shalt not! Nay, I will fight thee rather!"

It must be conceded that for two reduced gentlewomen delicately reared, the business of earning their daily bread honestly in our vast city is a hard one. A want of methodical system, of any sound and accurate knowledge in any special art or vocation; a habit of feebly regretting the days that are gone by; a sensitive,

tetchy spirit, or a peevish melancholy;—all these things are likely to exist, and to prove serious hindrances. If they commence a school or endeavour to conduct a boarding-house, too often the pupils are sent thither from motives of compassion to the teacher, without the smallest reference to the welfare of the child; or the lodgers stay long after they have ceased to find comfort or expect management, because they shrink from giving pain or showing apparent courtesy to a lady who has seen better days. So do some years roll on in unfruitful, dreary toil and unthriftiness, and then the insolvency that has long been inevitable closes the scene.

On the other hand, I have also seen that the kindness which the humbler classes are so ready to show to each other they still more often extend to reduced gentility; and this not from the pride which delights to pity, but from, it may be a rough, but certainly a courteous and genuine compassion. The man who supplies their daily necessities will not press for payment; the small tradesman will exhibit unwonted

leniency. But beyond and apart from all this, there is a wonderfully large portion of gullibility among the trading classes, which is every day exposed in our police courts ; it exists, and it increases, and roguery consequently thrives apace. Of course fresh schemes are required in succession, and old expedients have to make way to new ; but the feeling is always there—always ready and willing to be imposed upon.

Of the existence of all these peculiarities Mrs. Lackingham was perfectly aware, and she traded systematically upon them. I learned afterwards that there was hardly a town of importance on the Continent where she was not well known ; that she had more than once charmed her importunate creditors on the threshold, while her valuables were at that very moment being secretly conveyed away by the back entrance. Belgians, French, Germans, and the inhabitants of the Channel Islands, had all in turn experienced her fascinations to their cost ; and for a time, at least, Mrs. Lackingham succeeded in — Square.

She presented her letters of introduction, and her address, her speech, her becoming attire, and other characteristics, were so admirably effective that when she challenged pity and entreated sympathy and support, as one whose widowed and forlorn position fairly entitled her to it, her claim was very generally admitted. She did not advance her special qualities, so as to deter the refined and fastidious. Her sorrow was not obtrusive nor loud, but toned down to a becoming hue. Her poverty was at least clothed with attention to fashion and elegance. If the locality of her residence was not such as to excite envy, it was not such as to call forth derision; and lastly, the presence of Miss St. Maur—of whom I shall have more to say hereafter—was not without good effect in certain cases: and it was only on judicious occasions that the young lady did appear.

So Mrs. Lackingham obtained one or two inmates, who paid handsomely, and had in return very agreeable society, in a household which, if it were not regulated with system or punctuality,

was at least pleasantly administered, and completely free from dulness and constraint. Several, indeed, did in process of time leave, from unexplained causes; and Mrs. Lackingham shed tears over their departure: however, she bore her loss with wonderful equanimity when they were once gone.

Meanwhile, if the fare was sometimes scanty, and sometimes profuse, it was always choice and admirably cooked; if the breakfasts were thinly set forth at no very defined hour, the suppers, at which there were frequently a few guests, were models of what that meal should be.

Mrs. Lackingham was a woman of great and versatile talent; she had a gift of language, combined with a power of memory, which made her an admirable *raconteuse*. If she did not always adhere to rigid truth, few detected it; and, after all, a variation in that anecdote which is to point a jest or a moral is generally permitted without serious reprobation. She was well read, not only in the light literature of the day, but in the English classics; moreover, with

the large share of tact and penetration, and happy audacity of purpose which lay beneath her well-assumed meekness, there were the remains of considerable personal beauty.

These were no ordinary advantages, and they were managed with adroitness. An Irish gentleman, indeed, succumbed completely to these influences, and left in haste and indignation the day after his proposals had been rejected. A clergyman gave warning because he could not have his breakfast early enough; and a lady quitted the house on account of her intolerance of music: but, on the whole, Mrs. Lackingham bore these defections with great serenity, and only added a certain dejection of manner in alluding to them when she was explaining to her new friends the enormous difficulties, as she termed them, of her position. The antecedents of her career have been thus faithfully set forth, in order to enable the reader the better to understand the motives of her subsequent conduct. . . .

One foggy November day a lady was ushered

into my consulting-room. She began to talk very fast, though, from the numerous veils and wraps, what she said was perfectly unintelligible; but I seemed to recognize that cheerful voice, a little cracked and older, but kindly as ever. She proceeded in haste to remove a portion of those ties and respirators which women of a certain age are so fond of wearing; and at last I beheld standing before me in the flesh Miss Carnegie, whom I had parted from some fifteen years before. Changed, indeed, she was: the bright blue eyes were somewhat dimmed and puckered round by wrinkles, as much from laughter as from cares; but the yellow rippling hair was as rebellious to comb and bandoline as ever; the face was beaming with kindness of expression, and the complexion, though a little withered, had the delicate, healthy bloom of a Christmas flower.

“ Ah, my dear Paul—or Doctor, I suppose I ought to call you now—I hardly thought to come to consult the little boy who has so often eaten bon-bons out of my box; however, I

have found you out, and now you must prescribe something for the ailments of an old woman. I am not what I was," she continued, gaily; "years will leave their mark, and old age will bring its infirmities. But my spirits have never failed me: never yet, Paul—not for one single half-hour."

"No very serious case for me yet, then, Miss Carnegie," I replied.

I made the necessary inquiries; and, having elicited the proper information, I wrote a trifling prescription.

"And where are you staying, and what are you, of all people, doing in town?"

"I am residing in —— Square for the present as a boarder with Mrs. Lackingham."

"And I hope you are comfortable?" I said, dubiously.

"Oh, yes; that is, moderately so. You see my hostess" (she thus pleasantly idealized the connection) "has seen better days." And she proceeded to give me an account of what she knew of that lady; which, however, by no means

comprised all the particulars which I have related before. "I have no doubt," she continued, "that they have, as Mrs. Lackingham says, many heavy expenses to meet; but still I should like to have some idea of meal-times: however, the fare is all that could be wished, and the cookery is excellent, and the society very agreeable—musical people and artists, you know."

"But if you are not comfortable, why stay?" I persisted.

"And that brings me to the reason why I left my quiet little country place, Paul. You remember my brother, who died abroad, and his son, young George?"

"Perfectly well."

"I took charge of him. Providence has given me no children, and few family ties; he is a son, and more, to me. Never once has he caused me one hour's serious sorrow: he is a noble fellow now, much changed from the blue-eyed little boy for whom you used to fight battles at school. He is studying for the bar, and I came up to be near him." She laughed. "You see

what it is for an old woman to have a pet. I am like a hen with one chick—and think proportionably of my charge."

"Of course I remember George perfectly, and shall be very glad to see him when he can find time. This accounts for your being in town, my old friend, but not for your lodging with Mrs. Lackingham."

"That was by George's desire: he became acquainted with them, and they have been exceedingly kind and hospitable to him, though they can ill afford it; but the truth is, Miss St. Maur is the magnet, I suspect."

"Ah," I said, "I think I see."

"She is a very lovely girl—quite different to her mother: indeed, I am sometimes tempted to wish such a relationship did not exist between them. However, George is engaged to her; and they will be married when they can afford it. You see, since I am living here, George thought very naturally that my money might as well increase their little stock as that of an indifferent person. Besides, he wished, he said, to unite his

pleasures, and be able at once to visit me and Miss St. Maur at the same time; indeed, I see much more of him thus than I should had I been elsewhere: to share in the joys of those young ones that are growing up around us, Paul, is to live again all the brightest part of the life that has slipped from us; and if our noonday has been sombre, there will be warmer colours for the eventide of our days."

As I looked at her while she spoke thus, I seemed to understand the reason of her fresh complexion and happy face—so happy that it was almost beautiful in my eyes. Happiness does in one sense almost efface the marks of time: age is an unsparing sculptor, but his chisel tells with most effect on the hardest substance. It was too bad of me, but I could not resist the question,—

"Then does George think the place a comfortable one?"

"He does not very much like Mrs. Lackingham; nor do I; but I know it is a very uncharitable feeling—utterly groundless, I dare say—and I struggle against it. Besides, I don't mean to

say I am unpleasantly situated—far from it—only there *is* an uncertainty about meal-times" (this seemed a recurrent idea; it was a grievance that had evidently made an impression). "I dare say they are put to sad straits sometimes. I certainly ought to make allowances, but perhaps a *little* more system: only the other day the butcher, and the tax-gatherer, were calling for their money; they were put off: for, indeed, what Mrs. Lackingham said was, I know, perfectly true; not a farthing had they in the house, for the gentleman who has just left seems to have forgotten to pay his rent, though I dare say they are quite sure of their money, for they had excellent references" (Miss Carnegie was growing very discursive in her information); "but the next person who called wished to purchase left-off clothes, and Mrs. Lackingham produced enough of woman's finery to get a couple of sovereigns: that was not otherwise than commendable; but then it was all spent that very night in tickets for a concert, which we nevertheless enjoyed as though there were no such things as cares and

debts; only at odd moments I could not help giving a thought to the baker, who is a struggling man with a large family."

Here the picture of the enraged Belgravian tradesman presented itself to my mind, and I was almost tempted to laugh. Miss Carnegie rose to go, adding—"If you have any friend who wishes for board and lodging and pleasant society, it would be a charity."

"To whom regularity of meal-times is no object, eh, Miss Carnegie?"

She laughed.

"Well, I was thinking perhaps some Irish friend—"

"Ah, my dear madam, these Irish who are of unsettled habits are very often of unsettled income."

"Ah, you know best!" she continued, as she tied on her veil. "At any rate, it struck me I would just name it."

And so she departed—kind-hearted, loving, unselfish old maid.

A few days afterwards, George Carnegie called

on me. It is always a compliment to a young man if he be hardly recognized by those who knew him as a schoolboy, and in this instance it was one I could fairly pay. I had left him a mere child; and he appeared a man who stood six feet high without his shoes—and an uncommonly well-proportioned man too. He was what might be called a brilliant looking young fellow, with a pair of keen, impatient, blue eyes; yellow hair, lying in flat curls round a well-shaped head; features that were irregular enough, but open and expressive; and above all played a genial, gay, débonnaire manner, that had made him a favourite as a boy, and was likely enough to win him love as a man. We recalled old times together, and talked over the year in which he had the honour of being appointed my fag; then he inquired after my prospects, and detected a few grey hairs, and, as he declared, the marks of many a crow's foot on my face: "Well, I wish I had your income, however, doctor."

I guessed the current of his thoughts.

"I am nearly a dozen years your senior,

George: there is a time for all things; I shall see you a judge yet, if you set your shoulder well to the wheel."

"Ah, I don't know! it's hard work in these days. A man can't get a hearing, you see; and he may fag his heart out, and live and die, and be screwed up and put underground, and no one be the wiser but his clerk and laundress. I declare I don't know what a barrister can get to do, while he is waiting for his first brief."

"A good many get into Parliament, or hope to do so, if they are noisy enough."

"Yes, I know; but that is after a fellow has been heard, not before. It has been suggested to me to try public life" (Mrs. Lackingham's counsel, I thought privately); "and I don't mean to say that, situated as I am" (and here his colour rose considerably), "if I had a place of 1,000*l.* per annum offered to me I should refuse it; but I should prefer working my own way up independently, if I could."

After he had left me, I fell into a long and rather melancholy reverie. How many men I

had known similarly situated, full of hope and vigour, whom I had watched grinding away in respectable penury, silence and neglect, for fifteen or twenty years, until some fortunate opportunity presented itself to enable them to take their proper position, and bring their long and carefully digested learning to bear. And how does it find them?—with hopes that have been so long deferred that the heart has sickened over them; with constitutions more than half broken up. Old men they are now, and looking even older than they are; they have married, unsuitably and beneath them—or they have done worse, and now they are clogged with ties ignoble as a gentleman, or sinful as a man. The game of life is sometimes played out sadly enough.

For some months I saw George Carnegie pretty frequently; then there was an interregnum in his visits, and when he next appeared there was an alteration in his manner, which caught my eye directly. Now there may rationally be traces of legitimate anxiety on the brow of a man who earns his daily bread—or, at least, hopes to

do so—by the unremitting toil of his brain: these marks we expect, and they always rather ennable a physiognomy than otherwise, in my eyes; but there seemed, I thought, a good deal more than this—a harassed, perturbed look, an irritability quite foreign to his nature, and an air of dejection about him, unless he were actually speaking: he would remain staring at the embers of the fire, in a sort of gloomy reverie, after his gayest sallies, and leave me silently and abruptly. One night, on an occasion like this, after a long hiatus in the conversation, it came out with a healthy burst,—

“I tell you what, doctor, I don’t half like that Mrs. Lackingham.”

“And why, George?” I demanded.

“Why?—well, that is just what bothers me; just what I ask myself. I do not know—at least I could not say in so many words; but I have a host of small things in my own mind against her. She seems so worldly-minded.”

“That is too universal a failing to quarrel with her for, George; try something else.”

“She is very false, and too affectionate by half:—mind, she did not seem all this at first.”

“She threw a glamour over your eyes, perhaps.”

“It did not strike me so, at any rate; but lately she has very much altered in her manner to me.”

“It’s there, is it? and the change is not an improvement,” I said, jestingly.

“Don’t vex me, or I’ll say not one other word; that is *not* all. I think she is not kind to Marion: that is, not really kind; for the girl is so infatuatedly fond of her mother, that she takes the appearance for the reality, and will not hear a word of rebellion.”

“So much the better does that look,” I said.

“I suppose I ought to think so, but I cannot bring myself to do it. Why is it that Marion is always so white and silent now, when I am there, and that Mrs. Lackingham does all the talking? If I ask Marion a question, mamma answers, as though she were afraid of what might be the reply, and could not trust her daughter to deliver it; and I never see her alone—never.”

“Be comforted; you have an indisputable right to that, surely, and she cannot keep you out of it always. Time will be your best friend.”

“To say the truth, I suspect that, if a better *parti* came forward, my charming mother-in-law elect would quickly give me my *congé*.”

“But if Miss St. Maur be all right, you need not be uneasy.”

“She is so much under her mother’s influence,” he replied, in a dispirited manner.

“So she may be; but, by the laws of nature, a mother’s influence must succumb to that of a husband.”

“I’m not a husband yet,” he said, as he drew on his gloves, preparatory to going.

“*Sperate, et vosmet rebus servate secundis.* Good-night, George.”

“Virgil was not preaching *à propos* of a mother-in-law when he said that,” he retorted. “Good-night.”

Some little time after this, I encountered Miss St. Maur accidentally in society, though I was unable to stay long enough to have an

opportunity for an introduction. I do not pretend to be a judge of female beauty, but I thought her a very lovely girl. I liked her eyes particularly: they were of a soft clear hazel brown, large and well cut, with a kind of faithful expression in them; they harmonized in tone with a quantity of light brown hair, gathered round a head more remarkable for development in the sentiments than the intellect—a low broad emotional forehead—and one of the most exquisitely tinted complexions it is possible to conceive, almost resembling the hue of the inner part of some of our most delicate sea-shells. She had beautiful lips, mouth, and chin, but about the latter a critical eye might have detected a good deal of irresolution; her face was like an April day in its light and shadow, the smile sometimes sunny, sometimes a little pensive, but always very sweet. Her manner of moving and speaking was graceful and sparkling, with the *gaiété de cœur* which seemed part of her nature; and, lastly, she had in perfection that ease which often results from the inward certainty

of possessing the power of pleasing others at will. It might be, there were not wanting indications of a luxurious, pleasure-loving temperament—that music, flowers, delicious perfumes, elevating luxury, and the enjoyment of all those good things which are commonly said to make this earth dear to the children of men, would be, if not craved for, at least welcomed by her. It may be that she was not pre-eminently intellectual; not difficult to vanquish in argument; that she had not an atom of the martyr in her composition; that the opinion of the world always had and would have great weight with her; and that, above all, she was utterly incapable of vexing herself with the general unfixedness of her principles on the so-called great questions of the day. But that she was very beautiful, very loving, and very loveable, few men seemed disposed to deny.

Mrs. Lackingham was likewise pointed out to me—a fashionable woman of the world, still possessing the remains of considerable personal attractions. Her conscience or her health must

have been particularly good, for the *embon-point* which is the reward of luxurious food and mental calm had not deserted her; and if she bore herself with a certain humility, I hope Heaven will pardon me in that it did but suggest the thought of what her deportment would have been had she never encountered cross or care. Her manner was almost too suave, too honeyed, when contrasted with the strange coldness of her eyes; and that smooth, creamy complexion was too passionless to bear much heart beneath it.

Perhaps she was but the type of many a hundred others—at least, so I thought then; but I had to change my opinion in the end, and confess with thankfulness that, even in the fashionable world, a complete counterpart of Mrs. Lackingham is rarely met with.

When I informed George of what I had seen and thought, his friendship for me became more demonstrative than before, and his confidences more unreserved.

CHAPTER III.

MR. TREMLETT AND HIS ENTAILED
POSSESSIONS.

ONE evening a card was given me, on which was engraved the name of Mr. Tremlett, of —— Hall, and a gentleman, who apparently numbered something over threescore years, entered the room.

Mr. Tremlett was one of an old family, decaying not in its wealth or its territorial influence, but in that which money cannot purchase, and for which broad acres fail to make amends—in its blood, and brain, and sinew. Its members had married in and in, to amass property and add estate to estate, until that amount of disease which is the logical result became the legacy of the present generation; and the parent stock dwindled down in numbers,

until the sole direct heir of the family and its possessions was the son of the gentleman before me.

Ah me! that men should take so much care and thought for the improvement of their horses and dogs, and so little for that of their sons and daughters! Those who would unhesitatingly reject any impure or diseased strain of blood in their stables or their kennels, consult only their passions or their avarice in the choice of the wives, who are, nevertheless, to be the mothers of their children. Nature asserts herself at last, it is true; but at what expense? The wealth acquired in one generation slips through the hands of the next, owing to increasing incapacities and vices; and at a certain stage the race falls from one point of feebleness to another, until it becomes extinct.*

* M. B. A. Morel gives some very interesting information on this subject. He observes: "One of the most essential characters of degenerations is that of hereditary transmission, but under conditions much more grave than those attending ordinary heirdom. Observation shows that, failing certain exceptional elements of regeneration, the offspring of degene-

At first sight Mr. Tremlett presented a grand and imposing appearance. The thin silver grey hair, which had long receded from the forehead, lent to the latter an undue proportion and a false air of benevolence; the calm which rate beings present types of *progressive* degradation. This progression may attain such limits that humanity is only preserved by the *very excess of the evil*. And the reason is plain: the existence of degenerate beings is necessarily bounded, and it is not even necessary that they should reach the last degree of degeneracy, in order to be smitten by sterility, and become incapable of transmitting the type of their degradation."

M. Morel gives the following *résumé* of the ordinary train of phenomena involved in these considerations. We see,—

In the first generation, immorality, depravity, alcoholic excess, brutish disposition.

In the second, hereditary drunkenness, maniacal accessions, and general paralysis.

In the third, *sobriety*, hypochondriac and lypomaniacal tendencies, systematic ideas of persecutions, and homicidal impulses.

In the fourth, weak intelligence originally, access of mania, stupor, transition to idiocy, finally extinction of the race. Vide *Traité des Dégénérescences Physiques, Intellectuelles et Morales de l'Espèce Humaine, et des Causes qui produisent ces Variétés maladiques*: par le Docteur B. A. Morel. Paris, 1857. (Of course, every case does not necessarily present itself in this regular order, nor is every stage marked by the same amount of severity in the symptoms; but most medical men will recognize the general features of this arrangement as correct.)

rested on the features was not the repose of strength, but the absence of energy; the mildness of the eye was not the softened light of old age, but the filmy lacklustre glaze of a premature decay: a venerable picture indeed, but only a picture.

His personal history was not quite unknown to me. He had, along with many others, lived the life of the prodigal of old, in the days when George the Third was King, and the heir to the crown the foremost roysterer of the unruly spirits who were then banded together, comprising, unfortunately, some of the best names in England. In all this he in nowise departed from the traditions of his race. What he did, or attempted to do, his fathers had done before him. They had drunk deeply, gamed heavily, and lost gaily: rioted and committed every sort of excess in their time; and he would follow in their paths.

Fortunately for him his health gave way, and to this fact he owed the preservation of his already burdened acres. *They* were made of sounder materials, and after a time were completely restored;

he was flung on a bed of sickness, from which, after long suffering, he rose a prematurely aged man, with an intellect—never very strong—a good deal impaired, and the seeds of disease well planted in his own person. In some respects he appeared a feeble and somewhat imperfect specimen of a gentleman of the old school; but his views were narrow, his discourse inane, and his prejudices insurmountable. He was not, however, without some of the virtues of his class, and his manner, though a little pompous, was studiously courteous.

“ You will, perhaps, feel astonishment to see me here, sir ? ”

There was no reason, that I knew of, why I should: so I simply bowed, and expressed a hope that I did not owe his visit to his own health.

“ No, sir, certainly not. It is certainly not all that could be desired, but it is in a far more satisfactory state than I have enjoyed for some time. My visit is with reference to my son; I am somewhat uneasy about him.”

“ I regret to hear it, Mr. Tremlett.”

“There has been an unsteadiness, an irritability, a flightiness, if I may be permitted to use such a term, respecting which I am anxious to consult you. I think his health must be deranged: in no other way can I account for it.” He paused, and cleared his throat.

“Pray proceed, Mr. Tremlett; I am all attention.”

“My son has ceased in some measure to pay me that respect which is due to me, or to regard my counsel with consideration and obedience. Young men will be young men, sir.”

To this I made no response, as it is an axiom I always hear with a certain amount of contempt. Take it literally, and it is a platitude. Give it the usual breadth of signification, and I demur. I never could see the necessity for young men to make themselves less than men and worse than brutes; to waste their health and strength, and impoverish their brains, for that which is less than vanity, and leaves behind it worse than vexation of spirit. I intimated, that if this were the case, a clergyman or a tutor would, next to a father, be

the proper person to take cognizance of young men's irregularities. Eventually, perhaps, they would come into our hands, but not in the first stage.

"I would wish to prevent serious consequences, sir: there are reasons why the preservation of my son's health is of the first importance, and reasons, which it is not necessary to explain, why I notice any deviations with the utmost solicitude."

Poor old man! how tightly he clutched the key of the closet which contained his "skeleton in the house." "Reasons which it is not necessary to explain," even to a medical man from whom he was seeking counsel! Mr. Tremlett was by no means aware that long ago I had received exact information of all that he was now seeking to conceal with such an odd mixture of pomp and trepidation. Probably he would have been happier had he condescended to be more explicit.

One need not be a Roman Catholic to see that the necessity for confession is deeply rooted in the very nature of humanity. Not, indeed, to confess to any one, or all things at all times and in all

situations ; but the tormented soul is like the tormented body, and the hypochondriac and the conscience-smitten alike seek this relief, which is not always a remedy. The fact of this necessity existing on the one hand, and the Protestant jealousy of the priesthood on the other, has brought about this result, that the family lawyer and the family physician are, *animo et facto*, the confessors of English families.

In the medical profession we are allowed, perhaps, a wider survey as regards men's virtues. The lawyer, indeed, is the silent receptacle of many unhappy secrets, which, if divulged, would spread ruin and misery far and wide : he knows facts of crime and remorse, of avarice and cruelty, of fraud and wrong ; and the exercise of his duty perpetually brings him into contact with this saddening species of knowledge. But the physician is a spectator of the anguish of the body no less than that of the soul, and under this terrible combination the most defiant break down, and the inmost nature of the man is revealed. Not only the guilty passions — the baseness,

cowardice, and tyranny—but the bravery and heroic courage, which have not been proclaimed on the house-tops; the wrongs which have been borne in silence; the griefs which have made no cry; the hopes which have found their tomb in the loving heart that gave them birth; concealed wounds that have sapped young life away; self-sacrifice, woman's endurance, faith, generosity;—all those things of which the world has no knowledge, are bared to us at times in many tragedies of real life.

It has been quaintly remarked that the garb of the three professions is black, because they are in perpetual mourning for the people; the clergyman for the unbelief, the doctor for the weakness, and the lawyer for the wickedness of humanity. To return.

“My son is not what I could wish, sir.” I thought this so probable that I made no sign of dissent. The old gentleman felt the difficulty of the subject, and cleared his throat several times; then he offered me his snuff-box, and took a pinch himself with a peculiar grace, which

is hardly ever seen now; but in this very action I noted the palsied tremor of the attenuated and bloodless hand. He continued: "At least, has not been lately. I have thought,—and in this I feel sure I shall have your support,—doctor, that a matrimonial alliance would be the best method of making him comprehend the duties of his position."

"Of course such a plan has its advantages," I replied, cautiously; "but, in such a case, the future wife ought to be considered, Mr. Tremlett. If the conduct of your son be not what you could desire *now*, it might *then* be something less than his wife could wish."

The feeble hand waved in the air with a deprecating gesture.

"You must permit me to suppose, doctor, that at my age I know more of the world than a younger man like yourself can possibly be conceived to do. Many men of irregular habits have owed their reformation to their wives."

I held my tongue. What was the utility of argument when we disagreed on first principles?

It would be vain for me to recapitulate the long list of those women who had lost health, fortune, and happiness in the effort—who had struggled and failed—

“Who by the road-side fell and perished,
Wearied with the march of life.”

He proceeded: “My son can afford to dispense with fortune, sir; we should look for gentle birth.”

I was getting rather tired of all this; for it did not seem to me that in any case it could be part of my duty to assist Mr. Tremlett in choosing a daughter-in-law. However, I resolved to say a word to dissuade him from insisting too much on this point.

“No doubt, Mr. Tremlett, you are the best judge; but if any family could afford to consider that unnecessary, it is surely yours; and in the event of a suitable match presenting itself, do not be rigorous as to pedigree. Health and a soundly balanced constitution in marriage are not things to be overlooked.”

“Excuse me, doctor, your liberal opinions

have warped your judgment. Gentle birth is, on that very account, the more requisite."

I looked steadily at him: he cleared his throat, shifted about uneasily in his chair, and again had recourse to his snuff-box. He pondered a little, and there was a pause. It may be that in that moment he remembered his own childless brothers—his mother's grieved life and early death; that he thought of other dark and wretched passages of the family history. Who can tell? When he spoke, it was thus:

"It is possible that, as you surmise, we have sometimes laid too little stress on the possession of rude health. But it is a fault on the right side. *Noblesse oblige*," he added, with a sickly smile; and with this incomprehensible jargon he rose to take his leave. "I expect my son Lawrence every instant; you will advise him, doctor. I place the fullest confidence in your good sense."

In fact, before he quitted the room, the young gentleman was announced, and was informed by his father, in his usual grandiose manner, that

he was to communicate with me respecting his health. The young man threw himself into a chair, with a deep sigh of relief, as the door closed. He was not exactly ill-looking, rather tall, with a stooping gait, remarkably fine soft hair, and delicately pencilled eyebrows. The features were good, but the eyes had a very glistening, tearful look ; they were deep set in the head, and lit up with a sharp furtive glance of suspicion and discontent ; there was a hard line drawn round his mouth, and the lips were slightly parted, with a peculiar and unpleasant expression, which I have since learned to associate with particular tendencies of character. Though a good deal of irritability and peevishness was visible now and then, his manner was for the most part exceedingly gentle, and exhibited an appearance of great ingenuousness.

Altogether the moral elements seemed at war within him ; he seemed ill at ease with himself, and the dictum of the old philosopher recurred to my mind : "That man is sick in mind, in whom the mortal and immortal, the sane and

insane spirit, do not appear in due proportion and strength.” *

I said I was sorry to learn from his father that his health had not been quite satisfactory: what was the matter? He interrupted me rather rudely,—

“ Can you give me another body, doctor, or a new constitution? for that is what I want. I have never known what it was to feel well since the day I was born; and I can’t think what possesses the old man to make all this fuss about what he has seen and known for six-and-twenty years. I am not well. I never was well! and, what is more, I never expect to be.”

I had noticed his languid air, and one or two more indications, from which I drew my own conclusions.

“ We must see about that,” I said. “ No young man should submit to be a confirmed invalid if he can prevent it. I suppose you live pretty regularly—keep good hours—don’t exceed, eh?”

He answered very quietly: “ No, I don’t keep

* PARACELSIUS, *Opera Omn.* ii. 169.

good hours; the sort of sleep I enjoy is not so pleasurable as to make me anxious to devote too much time to it. And as for excesses, I dare say I have been intoxicated occasionally; but it is usually in a very slight degree. I am temperate compared with the men I am accustomed to associate with, but I suffer a good deal more. I'm an inexpensive man at a wine-party," he added, with a grating laugh, which contrasted oddly with his soft and rather musical voice.

"How do you spend your time? Do you hunt or shoot?"

"I used to do both; but I don't hunt much. To say the truth, I *dare* not ride as I once used. I assure you, many a time I've ridden at my jumps with my eyes shut, because I dare not do so with them open. I was afraid to look, and unwilling to stop." (I learned afterwards that there was at least as much untruth as truth in all this, which was, however, given with a remarkable air of candour; but of this more hereafter.)

"Your father, Mr. Lawrence, hinted that in

other respects you were of irregular habits: how far is that so?"

"Now, by heaven!" he exclaimed, with several supplementary oaths, "my father will never rest until he has accomplished his accursed purpose. He's always asserting that I live as he used to do. I may not have been a saint, but I am not like what he was. Moreover, I mean to marry, and become good for something, if he does not make it impossible."

I thought inwardly that there must be some good about the young fellow after all, though I could not understand the extreme bitterness with which he alluded to his father.

"Well, Mr. Lawrence, we must put you in the way of riding at your fences with your eyes open."

He turned sharp on me. "You will swear never to breathe a word of that to living soul, doctor?"

"Certainly," I said, cheerfully. "You are much mistaken if you fancy yours is a singular case."

“Ah! are you sure of that? I get into terrible fits of the blues sometimes. I often wish I was laid by, and the grass well grown over me. It’s not about money matters: I have nothing of that sort to disturb myself about. I got into a hole once on the turf; but that is long ago, and my father paid my debts without a word: but he cannot undo what he has done.”

“And what is that?”

“Never mind now,” he replied; “but order me medicine; tell me what I am to do, and how I am to rule myself.”

I gave him a prescription, added certain directions about diet and hours, and told him to come again soon. His hand was on the handle of the door, when the latter was pushed violently open, and he confronted George Carnegie, who burst in with some impetuosity. They were not in each other’s presence for more than an instant, but short as the time was, I detected a glance of cordial dislike pass between the young men.

“Well, George, what is the matter?” I asked,

as soon as we were alone. "You enter like a north wind."

"Matter enough," he returned, with an agitation he vainly sought to conceal. "I told you how it would be; I foresaw it from the first; and if I work until my brain gives way, I don't see how I am to help it."

"But, George, I am in the dark—literally as well as metaphorically. You are gesticulating like a madman. I suppose it is about something. Sit down, light your pipe, and condescend to explain. I'll assist you if I can, whatever it may be."

He sat down in front of the fire. As it threw its ruddy glare on his face, I could see that he was deeply flushed, and his hair tangled and in disorder. He commenced rather more connectedly.

"I hated Mrs. Lackingham, and did from the first, you know. I told you I could not bear her manner; and she has been hinting at her disapproval of long engagements, the excellence of riches, and the horrors of poverty, for some

time past—in fact, she loses no opportunity of talking *at* me. Well, the day before yesterday, she took me aside, and asked me roundly when I was prepared to marry? adding that she had a deep-seated repugnance to prolonged entanglements of this nature (this was what she called my betrothal with Marion); that she had observed with grief that her daughter's health was becoming affected, and her spirits undermined, caused, no doubt, by the present state of anxiety and uncertainty. And this to me! I, who would give up every other joy on earth, to call Marion mine, and have the right to free her from all these odious machinations!

“‘Madam,’ I said, ‘there is not, and never has been, any uncertainty as to what I was when you sanctioned my addresses; and if I have not at present that competency which Miss St. Maur has a right to expect, I trust to obtain it for her before long, if the hardest and most unremitting toil can do it. More I cannot say, and nothing new has occurred which requires a fresh arrangement of our position.’

“To this she replied that all I said might be—nay, for aught she knew, was—quite true; but that she felt now she had not acted wisely—she had allowed her heart rather than her head to decide; (*fancy that woman talking of her heart!*) that a mother’s eye could not be deceived with respect to her child; and again she demanded when I could marry, hinting pretty plainly that, unless circumstances altered, our engagement must terminate. I was in such a passion, I hardly knew what to do; I felt ready to choke; so I asked pointblank whether it was by Miss St. Maur’s desire that this question was put? She equivocated and hesitated.

“‘An answer, yes or no, I entreat, madam.’

“She began something vague, about her duty and her daughter’s delicacy. I saved her the trouble of inventing more.

“‘Because,’ I said, ‘Mrs. Lackingham, she accepted me, and she alone can dismiss me. I must beg permission to speak with her alone.’

“She tried to refuse this, but I was as obstinate as she was; and, much against her inclination,

I had an interview with Marion; and painful enough it was."

He smoked furiously for a few instants, and then continued,—

"It is hard to long to take your promised wife to your home, and feel that poverty forbids you to do it. She was so gentle; she made me feel ashamed of my own violence: but her face wore such a grieved expression."

"Was she surprised?" I asked.

"No, not at all. She said she had long expected it; but she did not appear to attach so much importance to the affair as I did. I told her that I had but 80*l.* a year which I could call my own, and that, in addition, my aunt allowed me one-third of her small income, which, however, I only meant to receive up to the moment of my getting my first brief. But Marion is very generous: she replied that the sum I mentioned, being more than she possessed, was more than she had a right to expect. But this, you know, was nonsense; for a wife has, at any rate, a right to be supported. I was mad

enough to propose to marry on that, and try to get a salary as a reporter; but she (quite wisely, I dare say) dismissed such a wild idea. She said "we should never fail in constancy towards each other, though we should have to yield as far as appearances went. Miss Carnegie would stand our friend, and as long as she stayed in the house, her mother could not refuse me admission as usual. I was consoled for the moment; it all seemed comfortable and easy while she was speaking and her hand lay in mine. But no sooner did "I find myself alone, than hope slipped from my grasp, and the whole prospect became one of unmitigated darkness;—the present misery, the far-off success, if success ever will reward me—in fact, all that was dispiriting and wretched—stared me in the face. I first got into a rage" (this he was rather apt to do on slight occasions), "and then into the blues. I never went to bed, and in the evening I thought I would call on her, and persuade her to say all these things again to me—her promises, her hopes, and her trust in me. I wanted to

hear her voice, and see her face—that is the truth."

"It was a hazardous inspiration," I said, "all things considered. Go on."

"Instead of Marion, Mrs. Lackingham presented herself. Good heavens! how I hate that woman. After a welcome that reminded me of the kiss of the traitor, she addressed me in this style—

"'I understand from my daughter that she has very sensibly declined to marry you on a hundred pounds per annum.' (This was with a perceptible sneer.) 'I therefore wish to return you this ring, which I do with her knowledge and full concurrence. And I desire that the engagement be considered at an end—at any rate, for the present. We shall, of course, always be glad to see you as a friend, though I feel sure your own good taste will suggest that your visits should be less frequent than formerly.'

"I rose, and got out of the house somehow, but how I don't in the least recollect; and

I found myself in the street almost before I knew where I was. I was dismissed from the door like an impatient tradesman. When I got home, I thought it must be all a hateful dream; but there was the ring in my hand to test the reality."

He dashed the ring as he spoke on the fire. I saw no reason why he should make a holocaust, and hastily rescued it from destruction. It was a small hoop-ring of emeralds and diamonds—a more costly toy, I knew, than the poor lad could have well afforded to buy, and certainly not one he need throw away. I pushed it into his hand.

"Come, George, this is boyish temper. I never expected to have seen you cowed in this fashion by an old woman. Breast it with a brave heart, and play the game out!"

Poor fellow, he did not reply, but thrust his fingers in his neckerchief as though he were choking; and I *felt* he was swallowing his tears. Young men do not weep in this country over their love affairs, as our neighbours over the

water are represented to do on similar occasions; but between the ages of sixteen and twenty-six there is a good deal of passionate irritability, which is something equivalent. Our eyes are then not so dry, nor our hearts as hard, as when we find ourselves a score of years nearer to our long rest. I would not let him leave me thus, so the talk went on far into the night; and when we parted he was in a less desponding frame of mind.

I continued to have occasional visits from Miss Carnegie. That good soul was sadly out of heart by her nephew's disappointment.

"I had serious thoughts of leaving the house at once, but George begged so hard that I would remain; so I consented to do so. He says his only hope would leave him, if I were no longer there; and poor Marion, too, wept at the idea; but I like staying very little, I assure you."

"You could hardly quit the roof without some other ostensible reason, Miss Carnegie; and, after all, Mrs. Lackingham has only done what

a good many other mothers do every day, and ultimately receive their daughters' thanks."

It was, perhaps, ill-natured of me to say this; but I felt that both the Carnegies were duped by Mrs. Lackingham and her daughter. Miss Carnegie indignantly denied my statement entirely. She was certain it was untrue, she affirmed.

"Indeed," she continued, "I am persuaded there is heavy pressure going on. That artful woman cannot throw dust in my eyes. Marion loves her mother sadly too well. I have proposed to George to let me transfer another 100*l.* per annum to him: on 280*l.* they might marry without much imprudence; and I could live quite well on the rest," she added, with a humble-minded cheeriness that did my heart good to witness; "but he will not hear of it."

"And he ought not," I interposed. "Miss Carnegie, young men are not so constituted that the first breeze must needs disperse them into air. George is very impetuous, though he has many fine qualities. Let him fight his own

battle—he will be all the better man for it in the end. I hardly pity him, though I sympathize with him. If he rises over the wave, he will learn his own strength. Remember that iron becomes tempered into steel only through being well hammered."

At this rough simile she laughed through her tears, which had begun to rise at my apparent unkindness.

"Well, Paul, do me one favour. There is to be a supper-party next week: if Mrs. Lackingham sends you an invitation through me, promise me that you will come."

"That I do most willingly, unless anything very pressing should occur; but I do not fancy I shall see anything to change my opinions."

During this space I had not lost sight of young Tremlett; but some new features of his character happened to be revealed to me. One day, two young gentlemen of my acquaintance were speaking of his father in my presence, and from him they diverged to the son.

“He is the queerest-tempered fellow I ever knew,” said one.

“Yes, and not the nicest.”

“I’ve known him do good-natured things,” said the first.

“And I have seen him do things that were bad-natured in every sense of the word,” replied the other. “He has given up coming into the hunting-field, and I am glad of it, for I have not patience to look at him.”

“I was told his health prevented him following those violent amusements,” I interposed.

“That may be *his* tale, but it is not mine, nor any other man’s.”

“What is it, then?”

“Simply this,” was the reply. “He used to hunt one of the best mares in the country side. She was a little too much for him, perhaps, being bold and eager, and he was always a terrible craner at his fences; however, she was a good horse, so one day towards the far-end of a fair run, Tremlett had managed, by way of roads and gates and gaps, to get more forward

than usual, though to do it he had overridden the animal sadly. He durst not have used her so otherwise, or on different ground; but up a steep hill of soft clay ploughland he urged her unmercifully, striking her with his whip over her head and ears, and actually riding with his spurs in her side, until the blood dropped down. The mare was maddened, and when she got to the top, where he fain would have drawn in, she took the bit in her teeth, and tore down the other side at a fearful rate. She did not get far—in fact, she was nearly done for—the first bit of rotten ground stopped her, and down she came with a tremendous crash, and threw Tremlett half a dozen yards forward, with his head against the root of a tree."

"Enough to have killed him," I said.

"It would have killed a better man. The mare was only stunned, and soon got on her legs; and Tremlett was not hurt, except in his temper. There he stood, when we got him up, cursing like a fiend, with his knees shaking under him, and his face as white as your hand-

kerchief—instead of thanking God for having saved his worthless neck. We helped him on his horse, and he rode home meekly enough, I assure you. So I offered to buy the mare, and bid him 150*l.* for her, cruelly punished as she was. He did not reply; so, thinking to persuade him, I said, as I thought,—

“‘ Tremlett, that mare will never let you ride her again, you have used her too badly.’

“‘ Then you shall not have her,’ he replied; and without another word rode home, with about as ugly an expression on his face as anybody need wish to see.

“‘ Two days after I saw his groom.

“‘ How’s the mare, Tom?’ I said.

“‘ She’s dead, sir.’

“‘ Dead!’ I said. ‘How’s that?’

“‘ Master went in to see her the morning after that fall of his, and she flew at him quite furiously. I believe she’d have struck him down with her forelegs if she could have got near him. So he ordered me to shoot her.’

“‘ I hope you didn’t, Tom,’ I said.

“‘No, sir,’ he replied; ‘I told him I couldn’t and I wouldn’t; so he fetched the other groom and his gun, and he durstn’t fire himself, but he stood by and watched; and they shot the poor thing dead as she stood in her stall; and I gave warning, for I would stay no longer.’

“And I hired him,” continued the young gentleman, “and Tom is one of the best grooms I ever had.”

I ascertained afterwards that the facts were precisely as stated; and with this little insight I gradually discerned new phases in Lawrence Tremlett’s character—that he was bold and fearful, kind and cruel—at one time speaking the truth, at another lying less from necessity than choice—with an appearance of ingenuousness, yet suspicious and reserved. These qualities seemed to oscillate in his composition. But the one which was always present and active was his capacity for hatred. He spoke of his father with a bitterness quite unaccountable, as though all he suffered was solely owing to him; and when I attempted at first to argue, and then

ridicule the idea, he became so violent in his language, that I allowed the subject to drop. Yet when actually in the presence of his father, he was thoroughly cowed and sullen.

Nevertheless, I contracted a certain liking for him in spite of all his peculiarities. His manner had a gentleness and softness about it, occasionally not without a certain charm; and I have heard him, after an attack of terrible dejection, speak and act so as to evince considerable sweetness of temper. His voice, too, was very low and musical; and when he liked he could be persuasive enough.

With these defects and virtues, such as they were, he was, as will be supposed, a greater favourite with the opposite sex than with his own. This distinction (whether it was won for him by his evident suffering and delicate health, or otherwise, I can hardly judge) reacted on him again; and he was even less popular with men than before. Perhaps the best sketch of his character was given me by an old nurse, who, having attained to the appointment of

lodge-keeper, after assuring me one day of her attachment to the Tremletts personally, added,—

“ Yes, sir, Master Lawrence is a very soft-spoken, pleasant gentleman when he likes; but he’s very false; and kind as he’ll be to us poor folk, *he’s dreadful cruel to dumb animals when he’s in the humour.*”

I have emphasized thus, because it was a perverted appetite, which increased on him in after years; and in general the gratification of it was only checked by physical fear, both at first and afterwards. The treatment of his horse is a case in point.

To return to the Carnegies. In due time a pleasantly-worded note came to me, written in an elegant feminine hand, hinting at the pleasure it would afford Mrs. Lackingham to make acquaintance of so esteemed a friend of their “ dear guest.” Thus euphemistically was it worded. The party was as agreeable as good music, choice viands, pleasant tempers, and a perfect absence of anything like restraint or *gêne*, could make it.

Moreover, there were the minor *agrémens*—plenty of light, flowers, and good wine.

There were not above fourteen or fifteen guests altogether. I need hardly say that men predominated; and among them I was certainly surprised to see George Carnegie and Lawrence Tremlett. There were others, of more or less note, in a literary or professional point of view—the only exception to this being Tremlett; and I remember wondering at the time how and why he happened to be there. The ladies were three in number, and of a certain age. No doubt they had been carefully selected, for they evidently enjoyed good cheer, had unbounded faith in Mrs. Lackingham, and were of that uncompromising good-humour which sees no evil.

Now I have said this little gathering was an exceedingly pleasant one; but there was one person who was uncomfortable enough, and that person was George Carnegie—I was well aware of this—and another individual also, who, I need hardly say, was Mrs. Lackingham.

My readers will, before this, have come to the

conclusion that this lady had either a good deal of natural hardness of heart, or that there was an absence, morally speaking, of that organ; but, nevertheless, she was not cruel, unless it entered into her plans to be so; indeed, she sustained a reputation for being of a very equable temper.

It may appear singular that by distinguishing George Carnegie above all the other guests, she ended by causing him to be in a very unhappy frame of mind. But it was no less the case. He was perpetually appealed to, or addressed by her; he, more than any other person, was pressed to sing—to relate—in fact, to shine. He had just been formally called to the bar, and frequent and eulogistic allusion was made to his prospects and talents. In the charades, he had to appear as the king, the tyrant, the priest, or the prophet! in fact, all the grand, but not the grateful, parts were assigned to him; while Marion St. Maur was the subject, the slave, the bride, or the penitent, as the case might be; and Mr. Tremlett was no less her defender, her lover, or her deliverer.

At first George was not ill pleased, but when

he realized the position which it forced upon him, and perceived, or thought he perceived, Mrs. Lackingham's *animus*, his spirit rapidly sank below zero. High priests and kings have their moments of humanity like others, in which they see cause to mourn the weakness of the flesh—perhaps all the more bitterly that they are forbidden alike by pride and creed to seek sympathy and consolation in its more pleasant forms ; and though it was all but a play, the young gentleman found it a saddening game ; he did feel it rather hard that Mr. Tremlett should, even in jest, appear to have entirely the care of Miss St. Maur. Once, when on pretence of examining some music, they contrived to exchange a few words, in a low tone, I saw her lay her hand on his, and whisper, “Have patience, George!—dear George, endure it for my sake ;—it *can* make no difference in us !”

At supper, it was again Mrs. Lackingham who claimed George's arm, as that of the hero of the moment, while to Tremlett it was given to conduct Miss St. Maur. One of the young gentle-

men rose, and, after alluding, in a witty and complimentary speech, to the character and talents of his friend, he proposed the health of the newly fledged barrister, “George Carnegie, and success to him !”

George rose to reply, with a natural elation, and his colour flushed high, as he returned thanks in a few words of spirited badinage ; but I noticed that when at the conclusion his eyes sought Marion’s, expecting to find an answering gleam of kindness, she was deeply engrossed in an apparently embarrassing colloquy with Tremlett.

Alas ! lovers often choose ill-timed moments, and then curse their fate. Now the instant before I observed her glance at Carnegie with undisguised tenderness and loyalty, but he missed that, as men do sometimes miss a brief joy ; and if none else saw, I did, that he immediately turned very pale, finished his speech abruptly, and, as soon as supper was over, left the house, without the ceremony of leave-taking ; and perhaps Mrs. Lackingham breathed more freely after he had gone.

I have not spoken of Miss St. Maur especially, but I had watched her narrowly. I thought her behaviour very graceful and winning; but what struck me throughout was the wonderful influence her mother had over her—reciprocated on her part by a love almost amounting to idolatry, not unblended, perhaps, with a strong tincture of the unquestioning docility of a spaniel. Though her low, pleasant, rippling laugh was heard at intervals, and not a few of those *spirituel* rejoinders which characterize those who have made conversation an art,—amid all this there were furtive glances towards her mother, a kind of dumb reference to her approval, which seemed more than natural.

After George's departure there was a visible diminution of her gaiety; and gradually her face grew colourless and her eyes dull, and a tired wistful expression stole over her features. Neither did this escape Mrs. Lackingham; and when we proposed going, she offered no great opposition, excusing her want of hospitality, as she termed it, by a tender allusion to her daughter's

health. "Not very strong at present," she stated.

When the men left, their talk was all of a laudatory character. As they put on their cloaks and lit their cigars in the hall, I heard various compliments offered to their hostess. For a few hundred yards our road lay in the same direction.

"Sherry *is* sherry in that house, and no mistake," said a man known as an able pamphleteer.

"Yes, and Mrs. Lackingham is good enough to put it before us, who are but judges, who cannot ask her back to dinner; there's a great want of that sort of benevolence in the world at large."

"Because we are *not* catches, I take it, so the greater the merit."

"Lawrence Tremlett is, though, my good fellow."

"Hush! he is just behind us."

"Well, for my part, I would rather go and live there *en pension* than not, if a latch-key is permitted; or I would not mind offering myself and expectations to Miss St. Maur, or Mrs. Lack-

ingham either, if I thought they would either of them take me."

Here I left them.

Now these were not young men of particularly rigid scruples, or likely to weigh their words when they spoke their minds. Their talk was about the average of their set; yet what they did say was favourable to those who had entertained them, and I could not help reflecting that I had heard guests much less merciful in their comments on those whose bread and salt they had eaten. On the whole they appeared to like Mrs. Lackingham. Miss Carnegie had a kind of fondness for her. Miss St. Maur was indisputably devoted to her—and why? For myself, I candidly own that from the first I had conceived a repugnance to that lady which no amount of blandishment had been able to conquer.

Perhaps the secret of her charm might lay in her tact. She ministered liberally, delicately, and pleasantly to all physical wants; no sensation of discomfort had been suffered to approach in the shape of talking bores, of bad wines, bad

music, draughts, or even uncomfortable chairs. But, more than this, each person had felt that he or she had appeared to advantage, and the *amour propre* of all had been carefully cherished. Certainly, we pardon less easily those who annoy our tastes than those who outrage our principles. Probably the career, past and present, of Mrs. Lackingham was so far known, that in our hearts the judgment of most of us was substantially the same.

Miss St. Maur, I perceived, was surrounded by all that the most luxurious taste could desire; her dress was fully in accordance with her beauty—more so than was warranted by their precarious means; in all minor things her wishes were deferred to; and Mrs. Lackingham's manner towards her was in itself a caress. So long as men are men and women are women, these things will have their weight; and I have known many a better mother less loved, and certainly more hesitatingly obeyed.

George Carnegie was, however, not to be charmed, though it were never so wisely; and

he came at intervals, and relieved his soul by hearty denunciations of what he termed the avarice and hypocrisy of that lady; nor did he scruple to charge her with breaking off his engagement as a first step towards inveigling young Tremlett into an alliance.

“ Recollect, George,” I said, “ that, speaking from a worldly point of view, she has a right to do the best she can for herself and her daughter; and after all, if Miss St. Maur remains in the same mind about you, no one can really separate you so soon as you are in a position to offer her a suitable home.”

“ Don’t think I am a coxcomb, or that I speak in any unmanly spirit of boasting, when I say that I am quite certain of her attachment to me; that is,” he added, rather sadly, “ if words go for anything. She is solemnly pledged to be my wife, and I never will release her—unless at her own desire; but no one knows the amount of pressure which an artful and resolute woman —like my mother-in-law elect, for instance—can bring to bear on any one so constantly

exposed to her influence, nor can they estimate the effects of this perpetual undermining."

"Well, it is in your own hands, George,—there are means to remove her from the sphere of that influence."

He took this so far to heart, as I was glad to perceive, that he toiled with greater assiduity than ever at his chambers, and a few briefs dropped slowly in.

"It's all very well," he replied, when I congratulated him on the prospect, "but I want a really good opening—a chance of distinguishing myself to some purpose."

"Be ready for it when the opportunity comes," I said, "that is what concerns you."

Lawrence Tremlett's health seemed to improve to a certain degree, in proportion as he adopted a more regular mode of living; but fits of great dejection of spirits still recurred, and his odd aversion to his father had not passed away, at least so far as his expressions permitted me to judge. I did at one time think of mentioning to him, as though by accident, young Carnegie's

situation with reference to Miss St. Maur; but on consideration, I refrained, fearful of stirring up a feeling of rivalry.

I have already remarked on his fierce propensities for hatred, and from several small things I gathered that his feelings towards George were not of the most kindly description. Now this was entirely unreciprocated by the latter, who hardly condescended to rate Mr. Tremlett as a rival to be feared, unless greatly aided by extraneous means. His wrath vented itself on Mrs. Lackingham; and his temper, I am sorry to say, too frequently on Miss St. Maur.

The two lovers still saw each other occasionally, in spite of rather strict guardianship, through the agency of Miss Carnegie. As yet Marion was permitted to accompany her on those endless expeditions which ladies call “shopping,” and while Miss Carnegie was thus engaged, a quiet stroll in some neighbouring square was generally effected by the young people. At first, after these interviews, George used to return in

reckless spirits ; but latterly they seemed to leave him in a very despondent frame of mind.

“I have told you I will marry you, George,” said Miss St. Maur ; “and if I am prevented doing that, I will, at least, marry no one else.”

“That is miserable comfort, Marion.”

“It is all I can give you,” urged the dispirited and weary girl.

“Have you no thought for me ? What right has your mother to interfere between us ? Bear with me, Marion. Remember, I beseech you, that for years I have looked forward to your being mine. I would do much for hope and fame,—but, love, the dark moments come, when I could hardly have kept my reason, but for the thought of you !”

Poor Marion was sorely troubled ; she did not know how to answer him, or how to defend herself from the effect of his ardent pleading. It may be, her heart responded to his with a power that only bewildered her.

“She is my mother, George,” she said, faintly ; “and you little know how tender and kind

she is to me in all save this one thing. I am totally dependent on her; nor do I wish it to be otherwise," her voice trembled a little. "I will not grieve her, if I can help it."

"Has she not urged you to accept Tremlett? answer me that."

"Mr. Tremlett has not proposed, that I am aware of, so that it would be premature to discuss the point," she replied, evasively.

What wonder that George returned home morose and gloomy from these not very hope-inspiring conversations?

"I don't think you have any right to worry her in this sort of way," I said, when he detailed to me the substance of the above. "It is not manly or kind to do so. Your place is to make her happy; and instead of that, you let your selfish jealousy have play, and rather than console her, you deliberately add to her discomfort."

"I cannot stand quietly by, and see another man invited to take that which is mine!" he retorted.

“ You will end by tormenting Miss St. Maur until she dislikes you, George.”

“ I shall do no such thing ; but I will try to be more patient and forbearing. I do feel that there is some truth in what you say. God knows I often think of her faults towards me, when I ought rather to grieve over my sins towards her !”

CHAPTER IV.

LES CARTES SONT BROUILLÉES.

ONE night I received a note from Mrs. Lackingham, requesting me to visit her professionally. I went at once, and was received by her alone. She wished to consult me about her daughter, who was complaining of indisposition. She had often been subject to severe head-aches; but was now suffering so much more than usual, that medical advice seemed required. With this short preliminary explanation, she accompanied me into her daughter's room.

Miss St. Maur was resting on a sofa. She appeared drowsy and inclined to sleep; alluded to a terrible pain and weight in her head. She had a dull and anxious expression of face, and her eyes looked jaded, if such a term can be

used—the iris seemed almost colourless. I could have wished to have seen her for a few instants alone, as I should have then ascertained my way more clearly. Almost every question I put, was answered with too much fluency by Mrs. Lackingham; Marion appearing as if she hardly listened either to one or the other.

“Had she received any blow on the head?”

“Certainly not.”

“Nor any nervous shock to the system?”

“Oh, dear, no! Is it not so, my love?”

An almost inaudible murmur, which might be assent or not, was all that Mrs. Lackingham received by way of reply. I could do little but order some suitable remedies, and promise to see her again in the morning. I did not see Miss Carnegie; but an hour afterwards, a three-cornered missive was placed in my hand, containing the following:—

“Mr. Tremlett proposed yesterday, and was accepted, at any rate by Mrs. Lackingham. Marion still holds out, though I hardly expect

it will be for long—this is the secret of her illness. I never see her alone now.

(Signed) "E. L. CARNEGIE."

Youth is worth something still; and so I thought when I saw next morning that my patient, though not free from threatening symptoms, was still decidedly relieved. As before, I had no opportunity of learning any particulars from herself. I expressed my satisfaction at the turn events had taken as far as *they went*—I laid emphasis on these three words.

"What is it you apprehend, doctor?" as I stood in the hall drawing on my gloves.

"Congestion of the brain, madam. Nor do I consider all reason for anxiety to be over. It appears to me to have been the result of mental harass. You had better remove the cause, lest more serious consequences ensue."

"Good-bye, doctor," replied Mrs. Lackingham, laying her white, jewelled hand on my arm; "we have been much indebted to your skill, and

will not fail to send for you if matters should appear to require your presence."

"Good," I thought, as I turned away; "you know my opinion of you, at any rate."

I was *not* sent for again, as my readers will divine; and it appeared the attack was staved off for a season, as I soon heard of Miss St. Maur's reappearance in public, with Mr. Tremlett in close attendance.

It was not long before George Carnegie came to an open rupture with Mrs. Lackingham. This was perhaps very natural, but I do not think he helped his cause by it.

Meanwhile, the silent pressure system went on; and some rather painful scenes were enacted in that house. For some time, Miss St. Maur bore up, and resolutely refused to consider Mr. Tremlett in the light of a lover. But gradually she succumbed to a certain extent, or, at least, became passive—unable, I suppose, to resist the affectionate and imploring representations which her mother daily and hourly poured into her ears.

"I do not know how it is," exclaimed Miss

Carnegie, “ but Marion seems to lose all courage, almost her senses, in the presence of Mrs. Lackingham. And however she may and does express herself to me on the few occasions when we are alone, a caress or a tear from that woman produces obedience. I can hardly bear to see her lay her aching head on that bad, false, hard heart, as she does. She must feel that she is tyrannized over, and is made to behave shamefully to George.”

So Miss Carnegie spoke rather warmly, it will be seen.

“ The hand is of iron, but it wears a velvet glove, I take it, my old friend,” I replied. “ But you must remember that these are not the days when young ladies are absolutely compelled to marry a person odious to them, if they persist in refusing to do so. It may be that Miss St. Maur has weighed matters, and finds that it will cost her less unhappiness to give way.”

In this I did her much injustice, I own, as I discovered afterwards.

“ Nonsense ! ” returned Miss Carnegie ; “ I see

what you think, Panl, that I am influenced by my feelings respecting George ; but it is not the case, at least not solely by that reason. That girl is miserable, and a child looking at her might see it."

In effect, a dull, wearied look about the eyes had become habitual to her, now that my attention was drawn to her, and no less a furtive, startled air, as though she lived in a state of chronic dread. Fate decreed that Miss Carnegie should bring about a crisis in the chain of events.

Miss St. Maur, one day, with a pale and desperate face, gave into that lady's hands a letter addressed to Mr. Tremlett, and Miss Carnegie herself placed it in the letter-box in a distant district ; for it may be mentioned that no letter from Miss St. Maur left the house without being subject to her mother's affectionate inspection, and this one in particular would certainly never have reached its destination,—for it spoke of repugnance to marriage—of conviction that there could be no happiness for them together ; it besought pardon for the apparent trifling with

affections, and implored earnestly that he should desist from urging his claim.

Whether Mr. Tremlett exercised a similar surveillance over his son, or whether it was owing to one of those untoward mistakes which often occur at the least desirable moments, I cannot explain; but certain it is, that it was into the old gentleman's hands that the letter was given, and that he was the first to break the seal. More than this, it was from his lips that Lawrence first heard the contents. If Mr. Tremlett's judgment was not very strong, that circumstance did not diminish his disposition for getting into a rage, and his anger hardly knew bounds. And after bullying his son by alternate bitter denunciations and sarcastic reproaches, as though his deficiencies had brought about what he termed an unmerited and premeditated insult, he insisted on the young man's accompanying him to the house, to demand an explanation, and sullenly and doggedly enough the latter obeyed, and the old man, in very angry language, produced the letter, and demanded the meaning of it.

In this emergency, Mrs. Lackingham's presence of mind did not forsake her. The double appearance was, indeed, undesirable and embarrassing, but she proved equal to the occasion. She dared not make too light of it, on account of the father; she was afraid to attach too much importance to it, because of the son; she might certainly endeavour to idealize it, but this was fraught with difficulty—the roseate sentiment that youth may admire, will be simply regarded as so much delusion by the old man: so she adopted a middle course.

Mr. Tremlett stuttered so much from wrath, that it rather disturbed his manner. He explained as well as he could, and then handed the letter over to her; and though she had indeed ardently desired to possess it, she glanced at it in that cursory manner which seemed to intimate that the contents were perfectly well known to her, and she proceeded to enlarge on the fears so natural to a young girl in undertaking the responsibility of the happiness of any human being; the overpowering sense of its

importance in all conscientious minds ; the irresolution of yielding natures in taking so momentous a step ; the innate modesty and reserve of a woman's character, &c. : but she summed up by affirming that such had, indeed, been her daughter's emotions in penning an epistle, which was, however, no sooner despatched than it was repented of, and that Marion would never rest until she had confessed as much, and Mrs. Lackingham left the room for the purpose of seeking the fair penitent, who was, they were wished to believe, only waiting to recant her error, and receive absolution.

She found the poor girl upstairs, almost insensible from fright. If she had not exactly deceived, she had, at least, acted without the permission of her mother, and already an oppressive sense of guilt overpowered a courage never very great. She had heard angry voices downstairs, and was shrinking from the consequences of her self-assertion, when her mother entered. Mrs. Lackingham did not announce her discovery with elation, though there was a well-

assumed appearance of wounded affection in her tone. She made no reproach, but affected to think it was a mistake, and one already repented of—committed in a moment of petulance—and that Marion would no less than herself be anxious to extricate them from a humiliating and almost ridiculous position.

Poor Marion had no words of justification, no extenuating plea to offer, but burst into tears, when her mother's arms were wound round her, and her head was laid on the breast that seemed at that instant her only refuge against herself. The hardest hearts have sometimes an almost magnetic power ; and before she well knew how, she was in the presence of Mr. Tremlett and his son. Mrs. Lackingham gave in a graceful apology, while Marion, with white lips, faltered assent to the truth of it. The old man's touchy pride was appeased, and he made it appear so as he took his leave. The young man's wounded susceptibilities were, we may suppose, tranquilized ; that he preserved his sullen demeanour was, in truth, more out of resentment towards

his father than Miss St. Maur. And his feelings were sufficiently intolerable.

George Carnegie was aware of the letter and the purport of it; he must, therefore, learn in the result the fact of her recusancy.

There are some things from which we shrink even when we are old, but far more so in the days of our youth, and among these are mortification in the eyes of those we love but little, and humiliation in the eyes of those we love too well. It may be that this short experience of sensation did even then reflect, in forms ever so dark and dim, the grief and anguish which would be the consequence of her irresolution; that the black settled sadness of a long monotonous conjugal tragedy rose up like a bad dream before her eyes. Whether the law of filial obedience to which she had that day made such costly submission, was rendered easier to her by the necessity which, it is said, all women feel, sooner or later, to make themselves slaves, a man can hardly judge; but when the dark hours of the night came, they brought no sleep to the unhappy

girl, but hot tears silently shed, and shed in vain, for they could not purge the bitterness from that draught, nor lessen the exceeding remorse and shame.

Was Mrs. Lackingham happier, or more to be envied? Had she indeed counted the cost, and struck the balance? Was she satisfied with the result? No doubt she had avoided stating to herself the exact measure of injustice and coercion which she had so unhesitatingly used; but was she willing to accept in exchange for the present winnings the possible future? How could she face the responsibility which would come home to her on the day when her conscience should awaken? Was it worth while to sacrifice a loving heart, and destroy her daughter's self-respect, for the honour of being mother-in-law to the wealthy heir of the Tremlett estates?—

Væ victis! woe to the conquered! Væ victoribus!—

The least woe is not always to the conquerors. After a storm the calm follows, and so it proved in the present instance, though the moral atmo-

sphere was heavily charged with clouds of complaints, distrust, and self-reproach. It was a characteristic trait of the singular want of candour and the suspicious temper of Lawrence Tremlett, combined with an utter inability to maintain a wise reserve, that within three days he gave me a sketch of the last scene from his point of view, stating, however, that it was an imaginary case.

Well aware how matters stood, I resolved to show him that he could not gain an opinion by an untruth;—therefore, when he concluded his tale with “What should you think of such conduct?” I replied, “How is it possible to imagine such an improbable state of things?”

He got a good deal excited in trying to prove that it was not only possible, but probable. I persisted in regarding it as ridiculous, assigning such and such reasons, and at length he broke out—

“It is a true case, and I know the parties. I tell you that I both saw and heard.”

I took no notice of the contradiction in which

he had involved himself, but accepted his statement.

“Unquestionably, I should think the young lady is under some sort of pressure.”

“Is it usual to betray so much hesitation and unwillingness?” he asked, fiercely.

“I should say not. At any rate, Mr. Tremlett, my wife did not, or I think I should have hardly mustered courage to press my proposals on her.”

“What should you have suspected?” he asked, with no small degree of temper.

“A prior attachment, of course,” I said, carelessly.

I almost repented of my speech when I saw the lurid light which shot from his eyes; he compressed his lips; and, as he sat looking into the embers of the fire, the red glare fell on his face, revealing a strange panorama of contending passions.

I continued—“If by any chance you ever found yourself the hero of such a comedy, I should advise you to relinquish the *rôle* and quit so troubled a stage. There are some things

of which the after discomfort is greater than the present gain, and I count the winning of an unwilling bride to be one of them."

He stared at me for an instant, and then burst forth into such a torrent of vituperation and foul-mouthed abuse as is seldom heard even within the walls of a prison. Young Carnegie, myself, and his father, all shared alike; the pent-up fury of a nature remarkable rather for the violence than the strength of its emotions found loud utterance, and he almost shouted out his belief that we had all three conspired against his rights.

The anger that is most noisy is generally the soonest silent, and I suffered him to exhaust it without a word in reply; and then I rose and poured him out a strong cordial, for he had turned very white. He shook his fist at me with a curse I do not care to repeat, and swore that it was poison, and that he would not touch it. However, I persisted with a quiet matter-of-fact air, and when he had swallowed it, I ordered a cab to be called, and sent him home

with a servant, desiring him to go at once to bed. He almost reeled as he rose to go, and was obliged to accept, with a scowling face, the assistance of my arm.

Many young men of intemperate habits, or under the influence of strong passion, might have said as much; and even with Tremlett it was not a departure from his natural character; for nothing exceeds the violence of a timid man when he is stirred beyond his own fears. Yet I had an uncomfortable foreboding about it, which I could not shake off, because, from the expressions he let drop, it was clear that it had been long brooded over; and that when he said there was a conspiracy against him, he only proclaimed the secret of his own sullen demeanour. However, I kept it to myself; I saw no one to whom I could divulge it with any prospect of utility. Old Mr. Tremlett was not too much burdened with wisdom, and would not be able to control a son of an age to please himself. The liberty of the subject is very properly fenced round by law. Yet, if doctors

were never called in until the patient was well advanced in disease, our per-cent-age of fatal cases would be materially increased.

Meanwhile, many scenes, sad and shameful in their nature, were enacted beneath Mrs. Lackingham's roof. More than once Miss St. Maur left the room in dismay and tears at the violence of her lover's demeanour, and it required all her mother's art to keep up even a semblance of things being as they should be. Miss Carnegie was now their only inmate, and from Mrs. Lackingham's manner she by no means wished that the stay should be prolonged.

“I cannot guess how they manage,” said Miss Carnegie to me; “for that there is an urgent need of ready money I am perfectly well-informed, yet she appears as if my going were a matter of entire indifference; however, she cannot force me to depart, and I have promised George not to leave, if possible, for poor Marion's sake.”

Miss Carnegie now ordinarily sat in her own

apartment; and when George called he was received there only, and saw no other person.

If Lawrence Tremlett was not a very merry or entertaining lover, he was very constant and pertinacious. One evening he was sitting close to the piano, where Marion, at his instance, was singing or trying to sing with what heart she could, and Mrs. Lackingham was working with her fingers, and scheming with her brain, calmly and pleasantly, by the fireside, when the firm tread of George Carnegie was heard passing the door to his aunt's room. Miss St. Maur turned deadly pale, and half stopped; she looked imploringly at her mother, but the stern, meaning expression of the eye belied the smile on the lip of that lady, and the silent command was not to be set aside with impunity: so she faltered on a few bars farther, her face grew whiter and whiter, at length the notes ceased gradually, and, like the song of the dying swan, became inaudible, and in another instant she fell back insensible into Mr. Tremlett's arms. Notwithstanding the affectionate activity of

Mrs. Lackingham and the agitated attentions of her lover, it was some time before animation returned.

It was uncertain whether the echo of those obnoxious footsteps had caught Mr. Tremlett's ear. I think not myself; for sharp-witted as suspicion does make men, I believe, that had he suspected the real cause of Miss St. Maur's indisposition, there would have been such an outbreak as would have scared the most unscrupulous schemer from the further prosecution of her designs. I was tolerably certain the mother was building on this alliance as the lever for pecuniary means. Miss Carnegie's account was that everything there was on the hand-to-mouth system, and from the recklessness exhibited in getting credit wherever it was to be had, and the carelessness about her lodger, I inferred that Mrs. Lackingham was either courting a crisis, or labouring for a reimbursement elsewhere.

Men in busy professions have not generally much time to bestow in meddling with their

neighbours' affairs ; but one winter's night, about seven o'clock, I was returning home, and had to pass through —— Square. A more deserted-looking spot at that hour it is hardly possible to conceive. Some church bells were tolling forth, with a strangely dreary sound, their appeal for evening prayers.

I say the sound was strange as well as dreary, because in London, perhaps, above all other places, religion is a thing for the seventh day and no other,—at least, was at the time of which I speak. The large blackened piles of stone were locked up carefully all the week, defended even from the faithful by massive rusty iron bars, until that particular hour when they should receive and pour forth again an eminently respectable and well-dressed congregation.

So, as I said, the bells sounded sadly in my ears, the moon shone mistily and coldly down on the cares and sorrows below—the passionless queen of the night. Many an aching heart, I thought, throbs in a very small space of ground in this mighty city. I think I know at least of

one, and I began to speculate on this untoward love affair. I had seen George Carnegie in the morning in a state which, if unlike his humour latterly, was equally unlike any of his former moods. He was reckless, excited, and jubilant, and ready to laugh on the smallest provocation. I accused him of having taken a champagne breakfast, and of being guilty of a levity unseemly in a future judge, all of which he bore with the utmost good-humour, but returned very incoherent replies.

Now, while thus ruminating, I passed Mrs. Lackingham's door, and the wish came, I fear not wholly unprompted by curiosity, to call there; besides, for several reasons, I was desirous to maintain a friendly footing. Miss Carnegie appeared, I thought, out of sorts, and as if she had what is vulgarly denominated a fit of the fidgets. Mrs. Lackingham received me with more than her wonted suavity. Miss St. Maur had a scared appearance, but, catching my scrutinizing glance, a very charming blush rose to her cheeks, and I apologized by reminding her

that, as her physician, I had a vested interest in her good looks.

Now we all know what it is to drop in at a friend's house and find ourselves not exactly the appropriate person for the moment, and this sensation was precisely what I experienced. Was I in an atmosphere of suspicion, or was I suspicious myself? Could it be my fancy that every one looked so oddly at me?

The conversation first flagged, and then raced, and at last became spasmodic in its character. Every remark I made produced an incoherent rejoinder of assent and dissent from Miss Carnegie and Miss St. Maur. Not so Mrs. Lackingham, calm, polished, watchful; whoever else was disturbed, she was composed enough. Marion was pale and then red by turns, and her hands trembled so much she could hardly pour out the tea. She tried to sing, and broke down, and at last declared she had a headache, and retreated to her own room. Miss Carnegie rose to follow her, but repented of her intention, and reseated herself with an uncomfortable and expectant air.

I left shortly afterwards, and Mrs. Lackingham accompanied me to the door. As I stood upon the steps she was still speaking, and our eyes at one and the same instant discovered a carriage and pair of horses stationed in the square, at the corner of a house about fifty yards distant.

“Your carriage, doctor, I see; had it not better drive up?”

I glanced again; that was no carriage of mine; a sudden inspiration came to me, and, rightly or wrongly, I followed it.

“There is no occasion to summon it,” I replied. “I will walk towards it: the coachman is probably asleep. Good-night, and don’t expose yourself to the night air.”

I closed the door after me gently, and walked onwards a few paces. There I beheld a postchaise and a pair of horses. The sound of the hall-door had not escaped ears that were on the *qui vive*, and a tall figure, wrapped in a horseman’s cloak, which had been lurking in the shadow, emerged into sight. I knew the outline of that person, and the whole scheme flashed across me. A few

words were hurriedly addressed to me by George Carnegie, for it was no other; and I trust none of my readers will be very severe on me if I confess, as I must if I speak truthfully, that to this communication I answered neither yea nor nay, but bade him God speed, and hurried home. I had no heart to offer opposition to that last resource, which might be open to objection, but assuredly embraced fewer faults, and of a lighter kind, than those which Mrs. Lackingham was prepared to commit.

That day passed away, and another; but the third brought intelligence, though of a contradictory kind. All I could gather from a frenzied scrap from George and some equally wild epistles from Miss Carnegie, was, that an elopement had been intended on the night in question; that Mrs. Lackingham had discovered it before it could be effected, and that Miss St. Maur had displayed the energy and courage which are the result of desperation. Driven to bay, she declared that nothing on earth should compel her to marry a man she feared, or deceive again the man she

loved. This was met by Mrs. Lackingham having a fit, apparently of the most serious kind, but whether epileptic, paralytic, or merely fainting, no one seemed definitely to know ; the symptoms recorded were a singular combination of the three ; but what *was* known was, that Miss St. Maur, in the extremity of her distress at beholding her mother reduced to a state hovering, as she supposed, between life and death, had reproached herself bitterly with disobedience, with ingratitude, and culpable deception ; and, while hanging over her mother, then in an insensible state, had made voluntarily a solemn promise not only to give up poor George, but to marry Lawrence Tremlett if she should still require it.

This promise being made had an immediately reviving effect on the dying lady, who recovered at once sufficiently to be able to accept the sacrifice thus laid on this most unholy altar ; and in a few hours all traces of indisposition had vanished ; indeed, there was such a well-marked absence of them, that Miss Carnegie boldly declared that the whole scene was a premeditated

piece of acting on the part of Mrs. Lackingham, played in order to make her mistress of the situation. Need I say that I, at least, concurred in the opinion?

The blow, indeed, fell; but it was elsewhere than on the guilty head. Miss St. Maur was reported to be ill—very ill; in truth, the attack of cerebral congestion, which had been, as it were, staved off, came on with great violence, and before long her life was reported to be in danger. Poor George was like a distracted man; he haunted the neighbourhood at all hours. Night after night, storm or calm, rain or fair, he was pacing up and down, eating out his own heart with wretchedness and anxiety; his face wore a sleepless, careworn expression, and all his flow of spirits died out. For the sake of the bare chance of receiving a word of hope from his aunt, he almost forsook his chambers, and saw his business neglected without heeding, much less regretting it. His thoughts were entirely absorbed in this girl; that love fever was on him to which harder and sterner men than he have succumbed in their

time. Truly, as Castilio says, “the beginning, middle, end of love is nought else but sorrow, vexation, agony, torment, irksomeness, wearisomeness; so that to be squalid, ugly, miserable, solitary, discontented, dejected, to wish for death, to complain, rave, and to be peevish, are the certain signs and ordinary actions of a love-sick person.”

During the poor young lady’s illness her ravings all ran on the one subject: the lover whom she had promised to forsake, and the bitter agony that came to her from her mother’s hand. She prayed for death, for the cold grave, anywhere for peace and forgetfulness, to be out of the world, so that the weary might be at rest.

At this time Miss Carnegie’s services were, of course, most acceptable; but Mrs. Lackingham hardly ever quitted her daughter; throughout, she seemed to feel no weariness; her affection never seemed stronger; yet in her purpose she did not for one instant falter.

It is to be supposed that this line of policy bore the fruits expected. Youth and a sound constitution triumphed over disease, and when

Miss St. Maur rose from her bed of sickness, blanched, tremulous, and looking like her own wraith, her first act was to write, in a poor, shaking handwriting, a sad—sad little note to George Carnegie, entreating him to burn her letters, and forget one who could never become his. She had, she said, struggled, but found it incompatible with her duty to do so longer, even if she were able; and, weakened and miserable as she was, she doubted whether she had strength to do so; his welfare would for ever be the wish nearest to her heart, but she thought she should not live to see it; she implored him to think gently of her, adding that the bitterest blow to her was the knowledge that he might be tempted to remember her only with hatred, and wish that she had never crossed his path; she would pray that with another he would find happiness in forgetting her. The last lines were very unevenly written, and blurred here and there, as if a tear had fallen on the paper.

Poor George was fairly unmanned when he showed me this, and I confess that I knew not

how to console him, for the thing seemed to me final: the question was decided beyond all hope or appeal. As first love is in its very nature beyond all other joys, so to be bereft of it is beyond all other griefs. Nothing else can bear comparison with it. Bystanders call it madness, old men term it folly, cynics deem it a delusion, and philosophers speak of it as a perturbed dream; but we all believe in it; we all recognize it; but that it attacks us too early we should all fear it, and whatever we may see fit to think or say, it generally gives us all cause to remember it. "Give me any plague," saith the wise man, "but the plague of the heart, and any wickedness but the wickedness of a woman."

At first George accused Miss St. Maur vehemently of not loving him. "She never had loved him truly. He saw that now."

"Nay, George," I said, "every line of that testifies to suffering."

"It is all very well for you to talk," he returned. "You have never undergone this horrible pain."

I let him say so. “Every man shall bear his own burden, and the heart alone knoweth its own bitterness.” If I could have proved to him that I also had once in my life been as miserable as he now was, *cui bono?* He was not in the mood to draw consolation from it. So I kept silence.

“Ah, doctor! never, never more! I cannot realize it. To see that for which I would give the breath out of my body, the last drop of my heart’s blood, given to another; and I standing by with folded hands! the love which was once mine! and now has gone from me, for reasons which are incomprehensible to me—which I am alike powerless to prevent, and unable to vanquish! Never, never more! And so days are to become weeks, and weeks months, and months will roll on into years, and in all this future there is no hope for me! Nothing but a dull, aching pain, or an utter deadly numbness. That is the best I can hope for.”

“Our forefathers knew all this before we did, George; and yet they erected a statue to Time, and wrote beneath, *A celui qui console.*”

“Wrong! wrong! all of them,” he returned. “Time does not console—it only deadens. It does not take away the pain. It only accustoms you to it; and the cure is worse than the disease. No blow is so hard to bear as this. Any other sorrow I could almost have welcomed!”

Alas! so it is with us all. “Give me not that: anything but this I can bear—but not this!” That is the cry of all humanity, availing us not one hair’s breadth.

Then he remained plunged in a gloomy reverie for some time, and when he spoke again he had taken a different view.

“Tremlett will never be to her what I should have been, nor she to him. She has been my guiding star through all difficulties and discouragements—my better self for years. Through the hours of the night how often have I waked to think of her and to bless her! I must see her once again.”

“Be persuaded not to do so, George. You cannot alter events; and it would be simply unmanly and cruel to add to her distress. She

is miserable enough, I take it, without that addition. The sight of you would be but another misery, and it is not for you to cause it. Go abroad for a couple of months, until——”

“Until she is given to another, you mean. By Heaven! I cannot bear to think of it! If there be truth in the words of woman, she loves me; and by what unholy means she is driven into this horrible sacrifice, God only knows!”

Owing to the perhaps excusable selfishness of man’s nature, he became, it was obvious, less unhappy when he had arrived at the conviction that she so loved him as to make her miserable at the idea of marrying another, than if he had believed that the step into which she was forced was rendered easier by her affection for him having given way. Of course, in cold blood it is not difficult to decide which mode of thinking we ought to prefer; but in the heat of the moment, wounded love leans to the opposite creed. On the one hand, to lose your love is better than to be shamed in it; on the other, the essence of true love is unselfishness.

Perhaps only a woman's heart is capable of that utmost generosity of self-abnegation which rejoices in being forgotten if the loved one find happiness or peace in so forgetting. I have read in books of men performing such a part, but it was never my lot to witness it in real life.

I saw clearly that George accepted his fate, and had given up any further hope. His temperament was one of those not easily cast down—but once down it acquiesced after a passionate effervescence, and turned to other things,—as contrasted with the apprehensive, resolute dispositions, those shallow, dark-browed, bilious men, who live in a state of chronic discouragement, and are yet endued with a tenacity of purpose which almost resembles blind instinct. The one is impressionable, but only as water is impressionable; the other is impressible, as iron is impressible: the first is elastic, the last unyielding: in the one case, failure is more quickly recovered from; in the other, men suffer, but they do not die; their feelings have the obstinate strength

of their constitutions—they cannot change, and they never forget.

Before George left me, I made him promise to leave England, for nothing sooner revives, or “waxeth sore again,” as Petrarch holds, “than love doth by sight.”

He kept his word; and I dare say for a few weeks the broad continent had no more distracted or profoundly unhappy adventurer in its fair cities than George Carnegie.

Meanwhile the calmness of the Dead Sea reigned in the house where the drama was actually being rehearsed. Alas! the scenes shift, but mortal men and women have no choice but to play out their parts—they cannot quit the stage.

“How Mrs. Lackingham has the conscience to persevere, I cannot tell,” exclaimed Miss Carnegie, in a paroxysm of indignation; “Marion is like an automaton—she obeys to the letter everything she is told to do; even a wish is complied with—but in what a dumb, spiritless manner—and at night she steals into my room

and weeps her heart out. But, wonderful fascination! she never reproaches her mother—never utters one word of blame, or hints at a dream of rebellion—and the day after a burst of tears, which she did not seem able to repress, she crossed the room and laid her head on her mother's breast, and there found rest, or seemed to do so; at any rate, she cried herself to sleep. If all those who have hearts of stone could be made to wear a suitable exterior, there would be much less deception in the world," pursued the kind old lady, in her usual rather fragmentary style.

"I admit all you say; but it is not a case in which you or I, or any one else, could interfere. No one can prop up a weak nature so as permanently to enable it to make head against a stronger one. It would be a contest against the laws which regulate the world. Strength, whether it be moral, intellectual, or physical, must prevail sooner or later in a struggle with a weaker spirit, brain, or body. And whatever people may say or think, submission even to

slavery is not the worst condition in the world—since many women, and some voluntarily, choose that condition. An organization that is not strong enough to govern, and too mutinous and irritable to obey, is in my opinion much more to be compassionated."

"Paul, you talk just as foolishly as men will do when they talk from their heads, and not their hearts," returned Miss Carnegie, undauntedly. "No argument will convince me that wrong is right, or that you would not speak differently to what you do, if you saw what I did. I tell you that last night poor Miss St. Maur prayed to die and be at rest; she is in a state of actual terror of Mr. Tremlett, whose demeanour, indeed, quite justifies it. She besought me to give her opium, if it were only to deaden her feelings, or, happier still, give her that sleep which knows no waking. Put it to yourself, Paul! if it were your own daughter, would you talk about weak natures, and strong natures, and natural laws? You are going to let her be given to a nature that

is not only weak, but morbid and violent: will that give her the rest in submission you praise so highly? She is not going to marry her mother. So what is the use of talking?"

"But no one can be absolutely forced into a marriage, my dear Miss Carnegie," I said, feeling, nevertheless, that I was in a very assailable position.

"Not by chains and prisons, I grant you; but is there no such thing as quiet persecution or silent tyranny? Poor girl! if you have no compassion for her, I have; and I do not think the better of you, Paul, for your hardness about it. Poor child! I once heard or read of a prisoner enclosed in four iron walls, which daily closed on him gradually until he was literally crushed alive; and Marion St. Maur is undergoing the same process morally."

"Well," I said, "I cannot meddle with the young lady, and I will not; but what I can do I will. I can give Mrs. Lackingham an opportunity of seeing clearly what she is about, and ascertaining to what extent she may become

responsible ; and that I will promise you, let the consequence be what it may. It wants yet ten days to the marriage. Go home, and say nothing of all this. I will see her to-morrow, and will persuade her to accompany me for a drive."

I communicated with a brother physician of mine, and receiving a satisfactory reply, I drove, towards evening the next day, into — Square, and sent up my card, to Mrs. Lackingham, with a request that she would give me a couple of hours of her company for an object of some moment. I was surprised at my own success when she sent a polite response in the affirmative ; and in a very few moments, cloaked and shawled, she entered the carriage. I thanked her for her compliance with a demand, which, I said, I should not have made so suddenly, if I had not hoped to benefit her and her family. I then conversed on indifferent topics, and she sustained her part with perfect ease, apparently feeling little curiosity as to my motive or our destination.

We drove rapidly for some miles, until we were well out of London, and stopped at a large house standing apart in its own grounds, approached by an avenue and lodge, with a huge locked gate. We alighted. I offered her my arm. We were ushered in in silence, and the door was locked behind us. As the bolt shot with a harsh sound into the lock, I thought I felt her make a slight movement. We proceeded along a lengthy corridor, and a respectable, stolid-looking woman hastened before us with a key in her hand.* Attendants employed in this capacity are commonly phlegmatic, if they are not irritable; so when I asked her, "How is your mistress to-day?" she replied promptly, and in a most matter-of-fact way,—

"She was very high all yesterday, sir—the winds it was, I do suppose—and tore her clothes dreadful; but the lady is better now, though she is a good deal off, and not to be trusted."

We stood before a deeply recessed double door,

* This was, of course, many years ago. In the present day the surveillance, though quite as efficient, is not so visible.

which she was about to unlock ; but I signed to her to refrain, while we listened to the strange medley that sounded from within. There were, apparently, two people busily and noisily disputing ; the voices were those of women, and one was pitched in a high, harsh key, while the other responded in a low, hoarse muttering.

“I play on my harp with a hundred strings, and the heavens show forth my glory, O Lord !”

“Old woman ! come down and reign over us ; the cat’s following in procession !” said the other.

“Twenty hundred harps !” resumed the first, in a furious scream, “and twenty hundred angels to play them at the wedding ! Rise up—up—up !” and here a sound of breaking glass ensued.

The instinct of the attendant was too far aroused to permit me to detain her longer outside, and she threw open the door. We walked into a large airy room, dimly lighted by two windows at a considerable height from the ground.

There was only one inmate of this apartment, and she was standing on a small, heavy, rough

table, trying to look out of the window, two panes of which she had that instant broken; the shattered fragments lay on the floor. Her hair was cut short, not as though it had been recently shorn, but as if it were habitually kept so. The countenance looked as if it had once worn a kindly and honest expression; but now there was a lambent cunning in the eye; the forehead was much corrugated by crossed lines, the mouth was lined and drawn, and the eyes puckered round, the skin shrivelled and dull-coloured: dumb records of those hours of agony, and temptation, and sorrow, which have, in such cases, to be borne unaided and alone—where the most loving heart cannot enter, and is powerless to console.* The head was tossed backward, and the eyelids half shut with a supercilious and inquisitive air. She wore a vestment which it is hardly possible to describe, over a coarse strong brown dress: it was of black cloth,

* If to suffer is to live, surely some maniacs attain a life-time in a very few years: hence the strangely old, worn appearance in cases of chronic mania, from the exhausting nature and violence of their emotions.

and might have been ecclesiastical from its shape; but it was almost covered with a profusion of shells and coins, sewn on in the most grotesque fashion. Shillings appeared side by side with farthings and halfpence; in each was a little hole, drilled so as to enable it to be attached to the cloth; then came a broken row of shells; then more shillings, and more shells, and so on; while behind, feathers of every kind seemed to predominate. The peacock's feathers were stuck in almost upright, so as to appear standing up in array behind her shoulders; but, unlike the extravagant attire of some of the insane, there was no plan or regularity of any sort observable in the arrangement of the ornaments; all seemed a chance medley.

As I said, she was standing on the table when we entered.* She made a flying leap towards

* I have noticed that most patients in a high state of maniacal excitement will, if left in a room alone, invariably mount on the highest piece of furniture attainable, and not merely to look out of a window. One man, who was occasionally placed in a partially darkened room, would shout for hours, unless he were supplied with a chair or table, which he

us, and for the moment I half repented of my experiment ; but I had not miscalculated the strength of Mrs. Lackingham's nerves. I did not even feel her cling to my arm, while the poor lady, with her face close to ours, addressed us with a rapid vehemence :

“ So you are come at last ! I have been long waiting for you ; and what message do you bring from heaven and earth, and all that are therein—the angels and spirits—and all that walk to and fro, because of the temptation ? ”

I replied soothingly, that we had not, this time, brought any direct message ; but had come merely to see her. She retreated a few paces, and stood peering at us—the head balanced a little on one side—and a queer, cunning, incredulous smile stole over her face.

“ Poaching on my Lord's manor ! ” she exclaimed, derisively. “ Heigh-ho ! for the gaol and the jury ! ” and she began to sing in a cracked, placed in the corner, and made his standing place. In the most severe cases of acute mania, the patient will crouch or squat like a monkey on the floor with the chin resting on the knees. This is always an unfavourable sign.

strained voice—then she stopped short. “Have you brought me some snuff, my dear?”

And as I did not hinder her, she quickly extracted a box from my pocket, and took largely of its contents, not without a certain *finesse* of manner.* She offered to Mrs. Lackingham a similar indulgence, which being declined, she became very angry.

“I know why you have come, and the reason, and the naughtiness of it. You cannot deceive me; but Mr. Christopher Tremlett is dead, and I am the lady in possession.”

Then indeed Mrs. Lackingham did start, not unobserved by the quick-sighted maniac.

“I can tell you what will make you start more than that!” she observed, with a threatening nod. “I’ll play on my harp with a thousand strings—you shall be beaten with a thousand—”

And here something attracted her, or struck her attention, and with one bound she resumed her position on the table, and, turning her back

* I think I have never seen even the worst sort of insanity entirely obliterate the traces of gentle birth or breeding.

to us, tried to draw herself up, so as to look out of the window, by grasping the framework with her nails. I had no further motive for prolonging the visit.

“Farewell, madam,” I said.

“You will soon be wanting me,” she replied, “but I shan’t be here; when I am weary of these four walls, you will hear me whirring through the sky! this night—this night!” she continued, screaming at the very top of her voice.

I drew Mrs. Lackingham out of the room, and the attendant closed the double doors, and locked the outer one.

“How long has that person been here?” said Mrs. Lackingham, in a slow and rather altered voice.

“Eighteen years, come Candlemas, my lady; but I’ve only been with her these last five.”

“Do you notice any change?” I asked.

“No, sir; only sometimes she used to be more dangerous and high than she is now. I’ve heard say, she was very bad when she first came.”

I handed Mrs. Lackingham silently into the

carriage, took my place by her side, and we proceeded rapidly down the avenue. When we had passed through the lodge-gates, she gave a long spent breath, and said, with an evident effort,—

“Who is that person, doctor?”

“That person, madam, is Mrs. Tremlett, the mother of the young man whom you desire, so earnestly, to become your son-in-law.”

She made no reply, and leaned back; but as we entered the city, the glare of the gaslight fell on her, and I saw that the under lip was bitten until the blood nearly started, and her face was of a ghastly whiteness. But she alighted at her own house with perfect calmness; wished me good-night, politely apologizing for not asking me to descend, owing to the lateness of the hour—and all in her natural tone of voice. Wonderful woman! was my reflection: how is it possible that she should be mother to such a daughter?

CHAPTER V.

A COSTLY TRIUMPH.

Two or three days after this episode, a shrewd tradesman in that neighbourhood observed to me, “That is going to be a fine wedding in — Square, of young Mr. Tremlett’s: none of your cheap sixpenny doings.”

“Are you sure it is to be?” I asked.

“Pretty certain; at least, as certain as we can be of anything. All I know is, sir, that if it does not come off, my men will be in possession the day after.”

“The bailiffs, I suppose, you mean?”

“Yes, sir; and some others hereabouts are on the look-out. They don’t mind a long score when they are sure of their money; but there will be very little cash *there*, and I’ve let the old lady

know that much, wishing to act fair and honourable, and not spoil sport."

"And you expect Mr. Tremlett will be good for it all, do you, Mr. —?"

"Why, sir, he wouldn't like his wife's mother to go to gaol, I take it."

I walked back a good deal disheartened. So my little effort, from which I had expected such great things, had failed. Not, perhaps, that I had had much reason to look for success. One never likes to miss one's aim; but to fail when you interfere in other people's concerns, is particularly mortifying to corrupt nature. I could not forget the affair; and the more I thought of it, the more I felt concern.

I saw how futile any further attempts would be. I understood how irresistible, steady, and complete had been the pressure exercised; how thoroughly individual freedom had been extinguished; how artfully every consideration, natural and conventional, had been brought to bear in this unhappy business; the fear of that ruin to which reckless extravagance always

conducts ; the stigma of that poverty which is of questionable origin ; the difficult and isolated position of gentlewomen who are but slenderly provided for ; the knowledge that the death of one cuts off even that moderate income ; the dread of appearing to behave ill, or of being behaved ill to, the dread of all those who judge hastily, harshly, or narrowly ; and, more perhaps than all, the sentiment of filial duty which not even an unprecedented unscrupulousness on the part of the mother had been able to annihilate ; —surely these were motives strong enough to account for Marion's submission. It may be also there was in it a development of that spirit of martyrdom which, in the nature of some women, is urgent to make a sacrifice, even if it be on the altar of an unknown god. I protest that even now I am unable to decide whether Miss St. Maur acted rightly or wrongly. Who am I that I should judge another ?

I was present at the ceremony—an unbidden guest. Mrs. Lackingham's face was of a composed and smiling iciness ; the bridegroom

wore a demeanour which alternated between dread and triumph—the inward suspicion that all was not right—the outward victory, which seemed to proclaim that all was well. Old Mr. Tremlett was there, looking more aged, more hollow, and as pompous as ever. His eye seemed to have a vacant expression, and I thought from several trifles that his memory was failing him a little. Miss Carnegie was also by Marion; and in spite of all her efforts, her honest, kindly blue eyes filled too often and too visibly to be unnoticed.

Miss St. Maur was at first very pale; even her lips were whitened: but she caught my eye, and gave a sweet, yet pallid smile, which, if I read it aright, was an expression of gratitude and thanks that she was spared the presence of one white and wretched face to haunt her through the life which lay before her, and that to my entreaties she owed his absence.

As I have said, she was very pale; but after that recognition, a faint but fixed colour settled on her cheek. As the ceremony proceeded, I

watched her with a painful anxiety. This, however, I can say: no sign of faintness or inconstancy of resolution was there. If ever I saw an expression of purity in thought, word, and deed, of single-minded purpose to fulfil to the utmost the vows she that day made—in short, of a child-like submission to the will of others, with a woman's holy enthusiasm in a path strewed with thorns and beset with dangers, and but faint prospect of joy in the fulfilment or compensation in the sacrifice—I read it in Marion St. Maur's face that day. Up to that moment, I own with shame I had done but scant justice to the motives which animated her conduct; I had given but little consideration to the cruel difficulties of the position into which she was forced; but I learnt both then, and more amply in after times, to retract my uncharitable judgment.

There had been some sort of promise given by Mr. Tremlett that Mrs. Lackingham should accompany them at least part of the wedding tour. Whether this proposal had been one of

the inducements held out to Miss St. Maur, to supply her with the requisite courage for a task which she had so often tried to evade, or whether it proceeded from Mrs. Lackingham's disinclination to be left single-handed to face her creditors, I cannot say; but at any rate, the arrangement was altered—not, I have reason to believe, without a liberal and weighty disbursement on the part of Mr. Tremlett. Miss St. Maur was wise enough to agree to the new plan, if without joy, at least without murmurs; and thence-forward she learned to welcome forgetfulness as her best friend. *Vestigia nulla retrorsum.*

And Mrs. Lackingham reigned alone in her house; and thus ended the first scene in this discreditable drama. I am afraid it is not a creditable fact which I am going to record, but it is nevertheless the truth, that two days afterwards this sharp-witted old lady was missing entirely; and nothing was left to the enraged claimants but the house, with the rent in arrear, and the furniture obtained on credit. Her flight was executed with a dexterity which the un-

charitable surmised could never have pertained to a novice in such affairs. But as, after many months, I had intelligence of her residing in a certain continental watering-place, in something more than comfort, we may infer that she had inclined to paying old debts rather than those of more recent date; or that, under her new name, she had found it practicable to blind the lynx-eyed creditors over the water.

Miss St. Maur had sought to soften the blow which she could not prevent, and, at her earnest entreaty, George was spared one especial pang—he never knew the day and hour in which she gave herself to his rival; a little trait of far-seeing tenderness in her which touched more hearts than mine.

He returned home, no longer an impetuous boy, but a man, and a sadder and wiser man. He had not, indeed, been victorious over circumstances, but he had obtained a conquest over himself. He did not proclaim war with Providence; he did not sneer or dogmatize about men, still less about women. If he had not proved

himself a Stoic, neither was he converted into a cynic. Professionally, he set himself manfully to hard work, and endeavoured, in patience and seclusion, to acquire that power of memory for facts, precedents, and authorities, that well-digested and various knowledge which an advocate must have ready to produce when fate grants him the opportunity. Morally he had also advanced. He believed more, hoped more, trusted more, and feared less.

Ah me! in the first burst of youthful vigour, we use our tongues or wield our pens with an overweening confidence in our own powers, which is, fortunately for us, quickly dispelled. We fortify ourselves in logic; we argue, and refine, and speculate; and demonstrate, to our own satisfaction, that man is everything and Providence nowhere; that the creed of our fathers is exploded, and universal intelligence is to prevail; that the old landmarks are swept away by our hands, and men are to become as God, knowing Good and Evil; that by the aid of political economy and the doctrine of utility,

a careful collection of statistics, and following out of the “inexorable logic of events,” we are to govern the world in that perfection to which it had never attained under Providence; and with progress for our religion, and the *vox populi* for its interpreter, a premature millennium is to be inaugurated. Grant our premises, we say, and you cannot escape our conclusions—and so we are satisfied. Words! mere words! Still the world goes on; men eating and drinking, marrying and being given in marriage, though the waters are gathering and the floods are nigh.

But the moment comes for each of us, when the soul refuses to be cheated, and we find that into God’s hand we must come at last. Once, yea twice, in the lives of every one, the things of sense drop utterly out of sight, and we see that sin is no chimera, that faith is better than reason, that time bears no comparison with eternity; that if we could make the world all that one’s self-conceit dreamed of, all that we have utterly failed in doing, the invisible is in the end what we most fear, the unknown what

we most desire. This comes home to us with our first grief, when the burden is too heavy to be borne, and life is a weariness, and all things are vexation of spirit; when our idol is shattered, or our creed has dissolved in our hands. And it returns once more when Death stands at our door, and the doctor has said his say, and the mourners gather around, and the world's wealth cannot make us live to see the morning's sun.

CHAPTER VI.

FOREBODINGS FULFILLED.

THREE years passed away, and George, though he had not yet been favoured with that one brilliant occasion for display of which all young barristers dream, had been marked as a rising man, and one likely to prove a sound and able lawyer. He rarely or never alluded to the Tremletts, and, observing this, I also avoided mentioning them.

I was aware that the young couple had resided principally at Paris, and that Mr. Tremlett had not been regarded as one very careful of his person, his health, or his reputation. Concerning his wife, the account was different: my informant described her as a quiet, elegant woman, much given to solitude, that she was with her husband

as often as his somewhat questionable pursuits permitted; but when apart from him she lived in retirement, and devoted herself to her little son, then not more than a year old. About this time old Mr. Tremlett, who had for many months been in a state of dotage, began to sink rapidly, and died before his son could be summoned.

The physician, under whose charge Mrs. Tremlett had been placed, told me, as a curious fact, that at that precise period the poor lady's malady took a new aspect, she becoming exceedingly low-spirited; the tears were often in her eyes; she rejected her food, and would hardly speak. It had been thought unnecessary, owing to her condition, to inform her of her husband's illness and death; and as she was occasionally very destructive, and only tolerant of that peculiarly ornamented attire before described, there had been no idea of supplying her with black clothes; therefore it could not be from any actual information that she fell into this melancholy. A few weeks after, the disease recurred to its original type of chronic

high mania, and continued so to the day of her death.*

Mr. Tremlett came over and attended his father's funeral, where he expedited the forms and ceremonies, I was told, with more zeal than show of affection ; and then for a short time he and his wife resided on the paternal estate. One day a friend of mine asked me if I had heard that — Hall was in the market. Now I had been so much engaged that, as it chanced, I had heard little or nothing of the proceedings, and I was surprised to hear it.

* Quite a similar case occurred in my own experience, where for years the patient had not uttered a coherent sentence : her husband died, though I was not aware of it for some days after ; owing to her indigent circumstances, she wore her usual attire ; indeed, her attendant was ignorant of the death ; but the poor woman wept incessantly, and one day demanded, in her broad provincial dialect, a black gown ; on my being told of this, I ordered that it should be given her ; and she wore it apparently with satisfaction, though she never would give any reason why she asked for it. In this instance the type of the disease seemed permanently changed, and after many months of intermittent melancholy she left cured. Of course it would not be very easy to give a rational theory for this, otherwise than there being a singular coincidence of sympathy.

“ Not that, surely,” I said, “ for it is entailed.”

“ That is just what puzzles me,” he replied; “ but, at any rate, it is advertised. You know he was dipped a little, they said, in some foreign mines; and I’m told he is behaving very hardly, and screwing up his tenantry to the last farthing; he is borrowing money at all hands, and has projected great improvements, and had intended to carry them out, but I suppose he is tired of it. Pray, had his wife any settlement on her marriage?”

As I did not know, I could give no information.

“ Well, he has a boy, but it is only a delicate child; failing Tremlett’s children, the property—all that is tied up, at least—would go to a cousin of his, William Mainwaring, who is now governor at —,” naming one of our smaller colonies.

This intelligence recurred to my thoughts several times that day; but at last I completely forgot it, until a few months later, when I was told that the Hall had not been sold, but let; that Mr. Tremlett had parted with his horses, carriages, and furniture, dismissed most

of his servants, and was wandering about with his wife somewhere in England—the exact spot no one seemed to know, as he had left no address, even with his man of business.

I was startled out of this tranquillity of mind, however, very soon. One evening, a letter was placed in my hands, the writing of which I had seen once before. It ran thus:—

“MY DEAR DOCTOR,

“You are the only person to whom I can safely address myself. Come quickly to me, as indeed I stand in need of assistance, for my husband is in a very disturbed state of mind—I fear much—” (here some words were blotted out). “Act with privacy, and do not make your presence known until I give you the signal; but I require advice and counsel without delay.

(Signed) “MARION TREMLETT.”

It was dated simply “Wednesday.” This was Friday. The postmark which the letter bore was that of an obscure village on the English

coast, distant at least 150 miles. There were no other directions; and on this vague information I had no choice but to act.

I put a change of linen into a carpet-bag, and started at once by the night train. The weather was uncommonly mild for autumn, and the moon nearly at the full;—so my journey did not promise to be a disagreeable one; and by this time I was old enough in my profession to be able to sleep in any position, on all occasions, and at the shortest notice—or to do without it, as the case might be.

It was nearly five o'clock in the morning when the guard awoke me, and I got out at a small roadside station. Here I learned that the village I sought was rather more than seven miles off by the road. The man good-naturedly gave me some hot coffee and a mouthful of bread, and directed me to take a shorter path along the fields. Leaving my carpet-bag in his charge, I started on my walk. The frosted dew hung in sparkles on the cobwebs, and the decaying leaves were flapping idly on the blackened

stalks in the hedgerow ; a few pinched and bitten blackberries and sloes were visible. The corn was gathered, and the fields gleaned ; and it was pleasant walking over the short crisp stubble ; but the turnip and potato land had not yet been put to rights, and over this I found it laborious enough, especially as the clay attached itself with great tenacity in lumps of two or three pounds weight to my boot. Perhaps a town doctor ought to keep a suit of clothes expressly for country excursions.

Before long I could see the long blue line of the sea sparkling and heaving in the distance, a few rudely built cottages of stone, and a very fine old castle standing on a considerable eminence, and seemingly the tutelar guardian of the place.

There was apparently only one inn, an unpretending, whitewashed, thatch-roofed building of rather rambling proportions, with casement windows irregularly placed. I entered without any preliminary.

“ Could I have a room, and bed and breakfast ? ”

“Yes, I could; but the best rooms they had were in use.”

I went up the creaking old stairs, ordered plenty of cold water, and enjoyed my breakfast thoroughly. I did more than this: I obtained exactly the information I was seeking for, from the stout, rosy-cheeked lass who waited on me.

There was a gentleman there and a lady, and a man-servant. He was not a free-spoken gentleman—no, not at all; nor the man either: the young lady was the gentleman’s wife; she was very pale and looked delicate-like. They had four rooms, and were out nearly all day. The gentleman walked about in his own room a great deal. Mother said he did mostly at night. She did not know that herself—how should she? She never waked up at night to listen, she was always asleep. The gentleman had blackish hair, and the lady light brown. They generally walked out of a morning. No, she did not often see the lady alone, for she was most always in the inside room—and the gentleman sat in the outer room, and took the things in to her. Yes,

they had a baby with them, and they paid very regular.

Of course I did not elicit all this at once; but a few careless inquiries aided me, and I found, that, like most country girls, she loved a little gossip.

Presently I heard several steps proceeding down the stairs; some heavy and quick, others light and slow, like those of a child descending steps. I stole to the window, and saw Lawrence Tremlett. His hat was much slouched over his eyes, he wore a velveteen shooting-coat buttoned up to the chin, and his hand was thrust into the bosom of it. Marion was there, leading a very fair child of about a couple of years old, or perhaps rather more. Mr. Tremlett set off down the road at a very rapid pace. She looked after him, then at the little boy, and, taking him in her arms, she clasped him to her heart for an instant.

“No, darling,” I heard her say. “Papa will walk too far for baby to-day,” and she gave the child to the girl.

I tried to open the window, but, failing in this, I hurriedly descended; but she must have run after her husband, for when I got out she had nearly reached him. I took the little boy up. Poor little thing! he had a lovely cherub face and a pair of large, candid, innocent blue eyes. I wiped away the traces of tears, administered certain sugared consolations, and then set out to follow the Tremletts. I soon came within view of the shore, and stood within a stone's throw of the castle, which I now perceived to be partially in ruins.

To the right a plain of sand stretched away, of a great extent, while the coast to the left was seamed and scored by vertebral lines of black rock, which ran from the low cliff in sharp ridges into the sea. They were very high, and composed of excessively hard material, abounding in iron-stone, and the sides were a good deal hollowed out towards the base by the perpetual play of the waves. They terminated in a dark, rugged bar, stretched laterally across, against which the sea broke with a fury that never tired;

and beyond this, if one might judge by the line of breakers in the deep water, and the remarkable absence of vessels, or even fishing-boats, there were dangers and impediments not visible to a landsman's eye. When the tide was flowing in, the rush of water between these long walls of rock was something terrific ; the green mass swelling up eight or ten feet in an instant. And owing to the cavernous recesses there was a hollow booming noise, from which the whole line of coast never seemed clear.

I observed Tremlett summon his wife close to his side ; then he pointed forward. She walked a few yards in advance, and stood still ; he waved his hand to the left with a peremptory air, and they both turned to the left—she being still a few yards before him.

I immediately took the inland line of the coast, and, seeing a high range of wood in a position which, I was quite clear, would overlook the whole bay, I walked on towards it as rapidly as I could, ascertaining from time to time that the two continued in their onward route ;

this I could do without exposing myself to observation, by lying down on the edge of the cliff. Once I saw the poor girl fall on the rocks, which were in some parts very uneven, and of difficult footing. He stood to watch her, but offered no assistance; and then signed to her to proceed. This I saw by the aid of my pocket-glass; for I had crossed their half circle so directly that I had stolen a good march on them, and they must of necessity pass close under me at one point.

I clambered up still higher, making my way through a dense planting of Scotch firs, and emerging thence into a brake of wet and tangled grass. Above my head was a group of irregular shaped massive crags, thrown together in a circular form. Into this ring I resolved to penetrate; my rough step on the thymy slope made it a fragrantly scented path; and the turf, yet thick with dew, was barred with sunshine and shadow.

From my elevated position I had a commanding view of a large tract of land and ocean.

Rocks upheaved everywhere; gray and lichen-covered stones broke the short, mossy grass; between some of the closely-lying rocks, stunted, hardy bushes had planted themselves, the ivy twined, bilberries flourished, and the tall ferns changed their hues from tender green to deep orange, and then withered into brown, and at last lay down to their death in the white shroud of winter's snow. Inland a vast plain of rank mud edged by sand-banks cleft the fields, on which the sea-birds gathered in swarms at low tide. When the tide rose, all this tract was beneath water. Between it and the sea was a wide extent of darkish, clay-coloured sand, in the centre of which lay stranded the black hulls of two vessels, their broken planks and twisted spars looking like skeleton bones of some defunct monster of the deep. They were immovable enough now, but the old coastguard men told a dreary tale of a night when they were covered with human beings, running frantically to and fro on their sinking bier, vainly trying to cheat the ocean of its prey, until one by one, as the

waves broke over them, the voices were silenced; the shriek became a gurgle, and the last prayer was hushed on the face of the waters, to be wafted up to a pitying God. And now a score or more of years had passed away, and the wreck still remained a monument of that fatal night.

Round these treacherous sands inland circled a broad arm of the sea, which flowed with the rapidity and strength of a deep river. This was fringed with yellow sands, and sloping, green rush-covered cliffs. On the opposite side of the creek, cliffs of a similar nature bounded the shore, and seemed to run out and join a certain island, where, in former times, holy men and women had watched and prayed for the mariner in the storm. Beyond this promontory I could distinctly see the blue water heaving sunnily in the line of the horizon; while in the extreme distance to the left, a rounded range of black, gloomy mountains reared themselves and shut out all beyond from view.

I lay idly watching the waves as they met

to clasp each other, rolling on and ever on until I almost wondered they were not tired of their game, but I remembered that some games are eternal. I noted, too, the strange, transparent, creamy green, which appears on the crest of each wave for the instant—and only for that instant—before it breaks into the marble white foam which covers the yellow sands, and crawls over the black rocks.

Yet, while watching all these things, my mind wandered with a feverish impatience to the objects of my errand. Before long Tremlett and Marion appeared. Marion was walking slowly and painfully, while he was hurrying to and fro about the rocks. Presently he took off his coat and hat, and appeared to gesticulate fiercely at the sea; then threw himself down on the wet sands, snatching up handfuls of it and thrusting it in his shirt-breast, and laying his head in pools of sea-water; then more angry cries, which I could distinctly hear; but the voice was harsh, strained, and hoarse.

I began to wish I had not placed myself so

entirely out of reach, as I watched his wife turn away holding her hands before her eyes, as though she beheld what was too painful to endure.

He continued to perform several other antics, drawing circles in the sand round her, and marching on the line so described with ludicrous earnestness and exactness. He approached again the outer range of rocks, where he appeared to be hiding something or other; this done, he retreated, and drawing a pistol from his pocket, fired at the hiding-place which he had marked.

As the smoke cleared off I saw Marion turn slowly round—not suddenly, as if the report of firearms were an unusual sound. What did I see? Horrible to say, he instantly levelled the other barrel full at her. I held my breath in dreadful suspense.

The precipice was perpendicular. I might, by shouting, have irritated him, but could not have controlled him. He was so evidently terror-stricken himself, that even the cry of a sea-bird, which I knew how to make, might have alarmed

him and precipitated the action ; so I remained motionless. Marion never moved, but stood like a statue. To my unspeakable relief, he discharged it in the air, and then placed it in his trowser-belt, having first choked it with wet sand. She turned away and cowered down on the sand, apparently weeping ; he went towards her, and was, I thought, reassuring her ; then he started off in a homeward direction. His face was very white, his hair and dress in great disorder, his shirt-breast and sleeves being wet and stained with grovelling in the sand. His wife picked up his coat and hat, and with some difficulty persuaded him to put them on.

They were now fairly started on their way back, and I was just closing my glass, and putting it into my pocket, intending to follow them at a distance, when I perceived a man standing about a dozen yards from me, watching me as attentively as I had watched others. He looked like a gentleman's servant, and something in his grave, concerned air suggested at once who he was. I said,—

“ Are you Mr. Tremlett’s man-servant ? ”

“ Well, sir, and if I am, what then ? ”

As briefly as possible I replied by explaining why I was there.

“ I’m right glad to see you, then, sir. It was I that posted that letter to you, and it was not easy for my mistress to get it written, for master never leaves her a minute alone ; indeed, sir, he’s clean mad, though he acts sensible enough in some things. About my wages, now, he’s very particular, and he pays his bills quite regular.”

“ Is he often as bad as he is just now ? ”

“ No, sir ; it’s only when he fancies himself alone he gets so outrageous ; if he’d known we were watching, he’d have gotten out of our sight before he’d have given way. He often makes my mistress stand as he did then, with her back to him, lest she should see him. He can’t abide being watched, sir—master can’t.”

“ Is he kind to his wife ? ”

“ After a fashion he is, sir. Sometimes he will kiss her gown or her gloves, or lie on the ground and mumble at her hand and cry ; but

often I can hear him threaten her dreadful, and make her take the Bible oath that she will never write to any of his enemies. Once I made an excuse for going into the room, and then he began to laugh very much, but she was all white and shaking. But, indeed, sir, she takes it all like an angel."

"Is he much altered from what he was when you first entered his service?"

"Well, sir, he was always queer, and not like any other gentleman, so timid and suspicious like, and he's queer still. No, sir, he's not altered, he's only gotten worse."

I noted down these words in my own mind; they expressed, I thought, so accurately the distinctive feature of the case. I impressed on the man the absolute necessity of his keeping strict guard over his master, as, whether or no he were dangerous now, there was every prospect of his becoming so before long. "And by the way," I added, "oblige me by obtaining possession of those pistols."

"I will do so, sir," he replied; "not that they

will be good for much now, for I saw him choke them up with wet sand."

"I shall send a message by telegraph for assistance; meanwhile you return home, and try to let your mistress know quietly, if you can, that I am here."

He promised to do so, and left me.

I then descended, by a circuitous path, to the shore, and examined the crevices in the rocks, about which I had noticed Tremlett to be so busy. There were several marks of bullets round the holes. The first contained some money and pebbles; the second, some paper covered with pencilled writing and figures. As well as I could make them out, they were unsigned cheques for fabulous sums of money. I preserved these, and towards evening returned to the little inn, where I ordered dinner.

About nine o'clock, Jenner, the man-servant, entered my room cautiously, and placed the pistols on the table.

"I have let my mistress know, sir, and she seems very glad; but she is in the inside room

now with the little boy, and there is a good fastening within, which I put on myself this morning before I went out. Master has ordered his bed to be made up in the outer room, and he's much quieter now."

"So much the better," I said; "to-morrow I hope all this will be rectified."

When he had gone, being a good deal tired, I continued dozing by the fireside until I fell asleep. How long I continued to sleep I cannot say, but it must have been for several hours, for I was quite benumbed and cold when I awoke, and not a spark of fire remained in the grate; but I was by no means in darkness, for the moon was high in the heavens, and poured a broad silver stream of light into the room. I rubbed my eyes, and, walking to the window, lifted up the sash, and leaned out.

All was still, save the distant splash of the waves. As I was on the point of seeking my bed, I heard a low growling, like that of an angry dog; this was followed by a prolonged snarl. I went to the door, and, opening

it softly, walked in the dark to the head of the stairs. There was a flickering light below. I noiselessly descended a few steps, when a strange sight presented itself. A candle, the flame of which was dying out in the socket, stood on the ground, close to an old iron stove or chimney grate, ornamented with uncouthly-shaped faces on either side. Opposite to this stove, crouched, or rather squatted on the floor, like a huge ape when frightened or enraged, was Lawrence Tremlett. A black coat was drawn round his shoulders ; there was a white garment beneath it, which I concluded to be his shirt, for I could see his bare knees, on which his white, unearthly-looking face was resting. The wretched man was gabbling, and moaning, and spitting at the unsightly object before him in what seemed a paroxysm of angry terror.

I was hardly able to realize the scene ; but even while I stood the precious moment had passed : with a low howl he sprang up, unfastened the door close by, which led into the lane, and fled. There was no time to awaken the house-

hold even if I had wished to do so, and unfortunately I had neglected to ascertain where Jenner slept. I did not wait to get my hat, but followed as quickly as possible, taking the same path to the shore which they had chosen in the morning ; but when I reached the sands no one was visible to the left. I rounded a point, and, straining my eyes in the opposite direction, instantly caught sight of the fugitive.

The tide was very low, and the sands, unbroken by rock, were bared, but so wet, that they looked in the moonlight like a plain of quicksilver. The right cliff was at first high and precipitous, and at the extreme point stood the castle, calmly towering over the bay ; beyond the ruin it sloped away into a number of low hillocks covered with very long, coarse, reedy rushes, and intersected with deep fosses, half filled with extremely white, dry sand.

Tremlett was walking along rapidly, sometimes breaking into a run, but keeping well to the centre of the sands. I saw plainly that they were exceedingly heavy ; he sank up nearly to his ankles at every step, and his progress was

evidently most laborious and toilsome. I avoided this difficulty by holding up to the right, keeping well under the shadow of the cliff, and thus I diminished a portion of the distance between us.

In passing beneath the castle, I glanced upwards; it overhung so much, that in the hazy light it seemed to sway to and fro as if about to fall on me; but no sound was heard, save the hooting of a startled owl. About three hundred yards beyond the castle, Tremlett turned sharply up to the hillocks I mentioned. I stopped instantly while under cover. He scrambled up a steep bank, composed chiefly of dry sand and the *débris* of broken shells of an extremely delicate and beautiful sort; and following the course of one of the channels among the reeds, his head was visible for a few moments, and then suddenly disappeared.

I listened attentively; the rustling sound of his movement had ceased. I marked the exact spot where he had dropped, rapidly followed his track, and lay down within a few yards of the place, determined to wait until he emerged.

There was not a sound, except the almost inaudible rustle of the reeds as they swept towards each other, or the wail of the plover as it winged its way over the inland moor.

The minutes seemed to me hours, and I could almost hear the beats of my own pulse, as I lay there motionless. The moon was holding her tranquil course above; the dark sea, the silver mist, all was unnaturally still. The old castle looked down steadily and coldly over the wide expanse of night; I could discern on its turrets in the moonlight the outline of the stone images of past ages—saints canonized for their holiness—men and women martyred for their faith—heroes crowned for their pitiless valour—tyrants remembered only for their wickedness, gone now to that place where their deeds for good or evil shall follow them, their bodies long since gathered to the dust, their earthly reward a niche in the sea-beaten walls of an old ruin, their requiem sung by the ever-moaning waves. I remember these thoughts passing vaguely and rapidly through my mind, and the singularity

of my situation struck me so, that I began to ask myself if it were not all a dream and myself the sport of an illusion.

Presently I heard a movement in the suspected direction. I raised myself cautiously. As my head emerged, another and a ghastly countenance appeared like an accusing spirit about six or eight paces distant from me. Tremlett saw me as distinctly as I saw him; and an expression of malignant terror stole over his features. If ever I saw murder, it was in his eye at that moment. We seemed like two wild beasts hunting each other down. I took it, however, very quietly, knowing that he was unarmed—at least, I thought so—when I heard a click, and he raised his arm and levelled a large horse-pistol full at me.

I saw the steel glisten, and for an instant felt that all was over for me. Instinctively I kept my eye fastened on his; he did not move: I then slowly dropped to the ground—and lying as close as possible, I dragged myself into the deeper part of the channel, trying to get under

cover if I could. I had certainly barely accomplished moving the length of my own body, when I heard the sharp ping of a bullet discharged at the place which I had occupied a few seconds before. The perspiration streamed at every pore, as with my face close to the sand, and my hands buried in the roots of the grass, I effected another length in a circular direction, so that I was in effect nearly at his side. But the pistol was a double-barrelled one, and I waited —— Another ping! and without pausing until the smoke had cleared away I sprang up and confronted him. He recoiled a few paces, and dashed down his pistol with a tremendous imprecation.

“ Devil! fiend!” he shouted. “ I might have known that bullets have no power against such as you who are sent to buffet me.”

“ Come, come, Tremlett,” I said ; “ don’t fancy that your old friend is a ghost, and don’t shoot your doctor for an enemy.”

“ Good devil,” he began.

“ I’m not a devil, Tremlett,” I said ; “ feel me.”

Taking this opportunity of slipping my arm within his, an odd, furtive glimmer played over his features; and afterwards the old down, cunning look settled there.

“Ha, ha!” he exclaimed, in a hollow, forced laugh. “Capital joke, isn’t it? The fact is, by moonlight, you know, you looked extremely odd, and I wanted—I wanted to frighten you.” (And you succeeded pretty well too, was my private reflection). “I dare say you think I look odd,” he continued.

“Yes; come, let’s get home: you must be cold,” I answered; “*I* certainly am.”

He returned to the same idea. “You think I look odd? Well, I rather prefer it. It’s my fancy. A man may have his fancy, eh?”

“Your attire is singular, I confess, Tremlett,” as I eyed him more narrowly. A pair of half boots thrust on his bare legs, a night-shirt, a short full cloak, and a double-barrelled horse-pistol, were his equipment for a midnight stroll on the shore.

It was not without difficulty that I persuaded

him to accompany me back; that he did so unwillingly, suspiciously, and struggling with a desire to explain away the circumstances under which I had surprised him, was evident enough. As we passed the iron stove where I had first perceived him, he made a *détour* round it; and before ascending the stairs hurled the pistol at it with all his force, making some remark to me to the effect that he found the pistol too heavy to carry upstairs: but I had seen what accounted to me for his doing so; and if I had not, the spiteful expression of his countenance would have betrayed his real thought. Whatever his other faculties might be, his capacity for remembering supposed injuries was wonderful.

For the remainder of the night, or rather morning, I did not, of course, lose sight of him. I say morning, because before we were fairly within doors, the first streak of murky gold which heralds the day was sent athwart the waters.

At length I was summoned to the presence of his wife, and leaving Jenner with his master,

I hastened to her room. I could hardly believe that pale, self-possessed woman, lovely as she still remained, was the same trembling, agitated girl whom I had once known as Marion St. Maur. She placed her hand in mine with the old grace which was habitual to her.

“ You were once very good to me, doctor, and you have now added a fresh kindness to the debt.”

After a few more words I told her of the arrangements I had ventured to make in sending for assistance. She was greatly moved.

“ Something of the kind I had foreseen, nay, for his own sake I had desired it. But now it seems all so sudden, so almost unnecessary—almost cruel,” and there seemed a smouldering rebellion in her heart against her own act and deed.

“ If you can think of anything better, of course,” I began——

“ Forgive me, doctor, I am unreasonable; indeed, I hardly know what I say: but what do you think of his illness? How long do you consider it may last—it has all come on so gradually?”

“ You cannot, then, date positive unsoundness of mind from any particular date ? ”

The answer came as I expected, and as I did *not* wish to hear it. “ No, I cannot. He was always very strong in his likes and dislikes. His feeling towards his father I dare say you know as well as I do. The old gentleman either never knew it, or did not choose to perceive it ; he had a sort of ossified affection for his son, perfectly unaffected by any variableness of demeanour on the part of Lawrence ; but assuredly he was not an unkind parent. I always found him ready to assist me in every way. After Mr. Tremlett’s death, Lawrence’s dislikes seemed to have broken loose from their anchorage, and though quite as intense and unreasonable, were less settled. They transferred themselves from one object to another. Now it was a place ; now a person ; a horse ; a dog ; a servant ; nay, even an article of dress. He was often alarmed for no cause, and occasionally showed strange suspicions about me ; and even towards our little boy. At rare intervals this passed off into profound remorse, or an

exuberant humility. And when this did happen, the sight of tears appeared to please him rather than otherwise. What afflicted me far more was his dreadful fits of depression ; for days he would hardly speak, eat, or move, and the expression of his face grew so dogged and despairing that it was pain to me to see him. Still you see, doctor, in all this, though his natural faults seemed to increase, there was no such violent change as to make me hopeless about him."

"No, I perceive," I said, mechanically.*

The little boy toddled into the room at this moment, and poor Mrs. Tremlett wept as she bent over him. I could well divine the pang she was silently enduring, and I could not think without a tinge of bitter disgust of the conduct

* Generally I find that the more quickly insanity declares itself the shorter is its duration (unless complicated with other diseases), not only because it is more likely to be caused by functional than organic derangements, and because a disease which begins slowly has more time to root firmly, but because it is more expeditiously submitted to medical treatment. One of the highest of our modern authorities states that nine cases out of ten are curable if treated within the first three months, if free from complications such as paralysis, cerebral injury, epilepsy, &c.

of Mrs. Lackingham, who had been as well aware as I was of the probable issue of the marriage into which she had forced her daughter. That this gentle, sensitive-minded being could ever have been the child of such a mother filled me with amazement.

Whether it were by an association of ideas, or that my countenance had been too honest, I cannot say, but I felt that she had read my thoughts when she remarked suddenly, "I have had very little communication with my mother, which has, perhaps, been one of my greatest deprivations." She looked very sad as she said this. "Lawrence had a morbid fancy that I should receive and write as few letters as possible; but how are all my old friends? Where is Miss Carnegie?"

"She is well," I replied, "and wonderfully little changed. She still resides in London, in order to be near George."

I was stupid enough to stop abruptly here, for the mention of that name recalled to me the memory of days which I knew we must both desire

to forget. Whether she really felt no emotion, or only concealed it better than I did, I cannot decide; but I think it was the former. I shall not easily forget the patient sweetness of her expression while I spoke.

“I infer from what you say, doctor, that George Carnegie is as much her pride and comfort as before.”

“There are few young men like him,” I replied, hurriedly. “I look forward to his obtaining the highest honours in his profession.”

“I can easily believe it, doctor; I did not expect to hear any less: if anything could have added to the wretchedness of to-day, it would have been to learn that he had failed in a man’s career. For many years I have never prayed without remembering his welfare; had events turned out otherwise, I do think remorse would have destroyed my reason. I can hardly tell, even now, whether I acted wrongly or rightly; but this I do know, that if tears and sorrow, and many and earnest prayers, could have protected him from the consequences of my irresolute

conduct, he must have been saved. I never was of a very strong purpose," she added, with a touching humility: "if I failed towards him, God knows, I have striven to do my duty since to the utmost."

"And not in vain," I said, "dear Mrs. Tremlett. It is sometimes good for us to be disappointed. Man is of a hardier nature than woman; it has not hardened or embittered him; I think it has strengthened his character, toned down his impetuosity, and made him more earnest of purpose. No; I think he has learned to forget."

In saying this I was saying more what I wished to think, than what I actually believed; and in my haste to reassure her, it is possible I blundered.

Few women care to be assured that the man whom they once loved has ceased to remember them. It was a severe test; and had any remnant of selfish vanity slept in her heart, any insincerity lurked in her word, she must have betrayed herself; but she bore it well; her manner was full of a calm, tender gravity as she answered,—

“It gives me indescribable relief to hear that it is so. Alas, doctor! how time steals the colours from our pictures, and the warmth from our dreams. Once I thought I could not outlive our separation; but when the first threatening of the malady of my husband appeared, as it did so shortly after our marriage, every memory was chased away, and for the last four years I have not had a thought apart from his welfare. I feel quite aged now, and am tempted to wonder whether I could ever have been so happy or so wretched as I was by turns during those few months. Nothing seems to stir me; I often think all feeling has withered up in me, and left only the mechanical power of acting.”

I did not prolong the conversation, it so saddened me; yet though about her there was a well-defined tinge of melancholy, it had neither weakness nor wavering in it. If “sorrow’s crown” is the memory of past joy, it may be that in a sense infinitely delicate the sorrow that has passed becomes the consolation of the present.

I need not enlarge on this part of my history, further than to say that when the necessary certificates were signed, Mr. Tremlett was committed to my care. It was not without some difficulty that this was done, for the general eccentricity of his character being so well known, it was a very nice point to decide when it amounted to insanity ; and his extremely cunning and reserved nature made him subtle in controlling himself in the presence of strangers. In fact, two days after the behaviour I have narrated, his demeanour was rather more that of a man who did not like his company, and was excessively anxious to retreat into solitude, than that of a dangerous lunatic.

For many reasons I declined to allow Mrs. Tremlett to appear in the matter. It was of little consequence for me to incur the odium of procuring the requisite authority for his removal ; but knowing that a prominent trait in him was the sullen hate with which he regarded particular individuals, I thought that if he imagined his wife acquiesced in his detention he would, if he ever

recovered, bear it in mind, and perhaps hate her for the rest of his life.*

For the same reason I refused, as, indeed, is my general rule, to take him away by stratagem or false representation. In a case like his, the

* There is a great difference between the feelings *after* recovery in those who, from a sudden attack of violent mania or a thorough mental imbecility, become totally opposite characters during insanity, and those in whom this malady comes on gradually, and is at last merely an aggravated form of normal sentiments. With the former there is often a grateful and kindly feeling towards the physician or attendant, or not unfrequently a total oblivion of all that passed during the illness, while with the latter the memory is sometimes perversely active. These rarely admit that their restraint was reasonable or just, and bear much ill-will towards those who stand connected with it in their mind. They regard it as an organized conspiracy, and the physician and friends as the paid and interested agents. After recovery in such cases, I have known it positively necessary to dismiss the usual medical attendant owing to this prejudice. I never saw a patient of this sort argued into taking clearer views, however apparently sound his mind might be; nay, the first discussion of the question usually becomes a starting point of irritation. In point of fact, these bitter dislikes are the residuum of disease, and like all other sediments, when they cannot be removed, they are best left alone. "Anger," says M. Guislain, "rises in a moment and is dissipated in a few minutes, hours, or days; but the anger of alienation endures much longer—for years and for life."

moral injury done by the loss of confidence engendered, far exceeds the ill effect even of personal coercion ; and it was of the last importance to my influence over him that he should have no deceit to lay to my charge.

CHAPTER VII.

SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LAWRENCE TREMLETT.

MRS. TREMLETT at first entertained the idea of living near her husband, and seeing him daily. At my earnest entreaty she consented to relinquish it. I pointed out the necessity for a total change of scene, and the probability of her visits becoming a recurrent source of irritation, as she would have to listen to groundless complaints, which being obliged to disregard she would appear helpless to assist, careless of his distress, or sceptical of his veracity ; she agreed, therefore, to maintain a correspondence instead.

I may remark parenthetically that he never showed any desire for her letters, but great anxiety that his should be remitted to her and that the contents should be inviolable. To this end he sealed them in half-a-dozen different places,

and fastened them with the most extraordinary devices. Though he was permitted to write as often as he wished, he always preferred sending them slyly if possible, and made several overtures to his attendant to procure him a special messenger to ride post. In default of this it seemed a certain satisfaction to him to put them, with his own hands, into the letter box, provided no one were near to watch him.

In a wonderfully short space of time all violent symptoms had disappeared, owing, I think, to the enforced regularity of his living, and the quiet pressure under which he found himself.

I much doubt whether he ever was subject, strictly speaking, to spectral illusions. When he mistook me for a devil it was a momentary hallucination, which might have occurred to a sane man under the influence of terror. In fact, his rather narrow intellect had not much tendency to great flights of imagination.*

* Men in whom the artistic faculty predominates often suffer much in this respect ; those who have had the greatest delight in colour, form, &c., who have naturally the power of summoning the eidolon of what they desire to behold or

But his moral delusions were numerous, and his sentiments very much perverted, his state resembling that which has been vaguely described as "moral insanity."

To explain a little more, I will give one or two illustrations of his behaviour while with me. At one period he was very noisy at nights, and yelled and screamed for hours together; when asked the reason he at once denied the fact. I took the trouble to stand outside his door one night for half-an-hour and convince myself. The shouts were in a perfectly natural tone of voice, though very loud, and also accompanied, after a certain length of time, by hoarseness. They bore no resemblance to those made by maniacs: of course there are shades of difference, which are only detected by practised ears; but there are certain peculiar cries which it is impossible to imitate, and which once heard are never forgotten, such as the shout of a maniac, recal, are much tormented by distressing visions, spectres, skeletons, &c.; musicians hear music, cries, voices; while orators will contend constantly with wordy and argumentative spirits.

the cry of an epileptic before he falls, the prolonged howl in brain fever.

Having heard what quite satisfied me, I entered the room abruptly, and inquired what was the matter with him, and whether he wanted anything I could procure: he looked slightly taken aback.

“I’m not aware there was a noise, doctor; it must be your fancy.”*

“I think not, Mr. Tremlett; it was certainly your voice.”

“Most probably some one shouted out, who is, like myself, wrongly detained in this house.”

“I was outside, and know your voice perfectly well: now is there anything which you wish to ask for?”

“It was not a voice at all, doctor; and noises in this place ought not to surprise *you*. I was thinking of other things, and was certainly not making a noise.”

* The same thing in animal life: the shrill scream of a horse chased by wolves; the almost human cries of a hare when caught by dogs; the very singular sound emitted by a toad when pursued by a snake, are examples of this kind.

"Very well, Mr. Tremlett," I replied; "but if I hear again a voice so like yours shouting out so near your room, I shall remove you into one next my own, as it cannot be agreeable to you to be distracted by such strange sounds."

After this we had no more noise at night. I need not remark that if his outcries had been involuntary, and the result of genuine maniacal anger or terror, no threats could have procured silence.

He experienced, as formerly, periods of sullen dejection, when for days he would refuse to speak, and was accustomed to sit motionless, his head resting on his breast. These were, however, rare, and were followed by an unusually active maliciousness of temper. I felt satisfied that this depression was not feigned.*

Several times he obstinately refused his food; and this continued so long that I was growing alarmed about it. As there were no other

* Silence may proceed from irresolution or resolution, just as stillness may be the result of exhaustion, or of equally contending powers. A fainting patient and a cataleptic are equally motionless, though from opposite causes.

indications of suicidal intention, before I had recourse to force, I conceived the idea of placing him so that he would be able to procure it as it were by stealth and eat it unseen. This answered perfectly ; meanwhile, he regularly sent away his meals untouched.

I managed one day to surprise him during one of his secret repasts, when I thought the farce had lasted long enough ; and without any comment, I expressed my pleasure that his appetite was restored, and that he could now enjoy his food. He appeared a little confused—and then burst into a loud fit of laughter ; but after this he never refused his food.*

I thus beheld the curious spectacle of a madman trying to simulate mania.

* When a patient refuses nourishment it is of importance to ascertain from what cause he does so. It may be from a loathing for all food, as in certain internal disorders, or from hallucinations of taste or smell, so that it appears bitter, unwholesome, or nauseous to him ; or it might be from a fixed delusion that it contains poison ; or again, from a desire for death : but in the last case there are commonly other indications as well of a suicidal intention. I have known a patient refuse to eat from a hallucination of hearing: he fancied that he heard voices which commanded him to refrain.

The cruelty of disposition which characterized him as a young man increased, until it became a well-marked feature of the disease. So much so, that he had to be carefully watched. It was one of his supreme delights to set dogs to worry cats—or to incite fowls to destroy each other. At one time several of the hens were found strangled. I suspected him, and mentioned it incidentally; he said he was sorry to hear the intelligence, but he thought that they were better dead than alive. I took the hint, and removed them to other quarters, and the mortality disappeared.

As another instance of his perverted taste, I may mention that I found him one fine spring morning in the garden with a score or more of young birds which he had caught in a trap; he was deliberately wringing their necks one by one, and ten or twelve of the poor little creatures had fluttered their last and were lying dead on a chair at his side. I spoke angrily to him, and insisted on his immediately releasing the rest; he did so without any remonstrance; but far

from evincing any contrition, he displayed a singular and unnatural hardness of heart.

This want of humanity was not confined to his conduct towards animals; and his perverse malignity was such, that at last I never allowed him to mix with the other patients, except under supervision.

One unfortunate gentleman was suffering from religious melancholy, under the idea that he had offended God beyond forgiveness, and that his soul was lost, &c. This patient endured indescribable mental agony, striving by all kinds of curious acts and self-inflections to propitiate an offended Deity. Several times Mr. Tremlett appeared most anxious to secure this gentleman's society; and having induced him to detail his history, he confirmed the other in all his terrors, and proceeded to expatiate complacently upon the horrors of eternal punishment. Then he began to utter the most terrible blasphemies and imprecations, enough to shock the ears of a sane man, much more of one morbidly excited on such topics. When the attendant found it necessary

to separate them, Tremlett was in the act of declaring that God would assuredly remember the event of that day, and also the additional guilt which the other patient had incurred by listening to his (Tremlett's) blasphemy.

His tendencies were well understood by his attendant, as the following fact will prove:—

“How is Mr. Tremlett to-day?” I asked; “has he been good-tempered lately?”

“Oh, yes, sir,” was the reply. “Ever since he heard of poor Mr. Dowlas losing his father, and saw him taking on so about it, he has been quite cheerful—we always say, sir, when every one else is sorry, Mr. Tremlett is glad.”

His mendacity remained in full force. He frequently assured me that he was perfectly satisfied with his residence and treatment: though, he added, he regarded himself as unjustly detained, and the victim of conspiracy; but he made this statement with an air of candour, almost of affection, which was difficult to doubt. Yet on all these occasions, he had been abusing me violently to the man who waited on him,

and had been endeavouring to bribe the latter to contrive his escape. It often really occurred to me, that he was more fit for a reformatory than a lunatic asylum ; but I suppose if he had been there he would have been returned with the verdict reversed.

With the exception of these incidents, which happened within the first three months of his residence, there was little to point him out as an insane man : the furtive, suspicious air and the expression of malicious cunning had been habitual to him long before. After this, however, I observed a slight alteration in his bodily state : the alternate languor and tremor to which he had been subject gave way to an exaltation of the nervous system, which announced itself in his jerking movements, in the rigid clasp of the hand, and the tension of the muscles. He did not so much eat his food as snatch at it. This peculiarity partially disappeared after a time ; but I had occasion to remember it ultimately.

In all this how little there was to prove him insane to a casual observer : how slight

seemed the evidence which I could adduce! Would it satisfy any inquirer, even a professional one, unless he had known the man, and resided under the same roof? I doubted it.

He presented no resemblance to the popular idea of a madman. Many of our fellow-creatures are malicious, or cruel, or deceitful and capricious, sullen and irritable, but yet are free to walk the earth at their pleasure, and very properly so. There are very clever men who have a far less accurate idea of the value of money than poor Tremlett. His was no alienation: none could say in the true sense of the word, "This man is not himself." It was his worst self developed, the normal sentiments aggravated, the malignity confirmed, the moral sense perverted to begin with, and strengthened in its perversion.

In my own mind I felt satisfied that some disease of the brain was going on, and not only that he was insane, but that if he were set at liberty he would recommence a series of irregularities which would terminate in scenes similar to that which occurred when I was sent for, and perhaps

result in serious consequences to himself or others.

Moreover, such a case as his did not offer to my eye much hope of recovery, and for this reason: as a rule, the greater and more sudden the change in the character when insanity declares itself, the greater the chance of cure; and the converse likewise holds good.

But it has been agreed on by high authorities that there is a combination more unfavourable still, and my own experience fully accords with it: this is, when insanity begins, as in the last instance, and the character changes *during* the malady, yet reverts ultimately to its original type, but in an aggravated form. Thus, for instance, a melancholy man is attacked by insanity, in the form of religious melancholy; after some time mania comes on, his religious delusions vanish, and his mind is in the incoherent excited state proper to that condition. If this in its turn passes off and gives place once more to melancholy, I should have no sanguine opinion of that case.

Now all I heard went to prove that Mr. Trem-

lett had exhibited his present characteristics long before he was actually pronounced insane. When I found him at — he was beyond all doubt labouring under a smart attack of mania. That had disappeared; but he had returned to his previous condition, only in an aggravated form. It appeared to me, therefore, that all the points of an unfavourable combination were present.

And this conviction grieved me not a little. Poor Mrs. Tremlett—without a husband, without a home—a prey to the most wearying anxiety, whose hope ever must necessarily be blended with fear, and whose child, dear consolation as it might be, could not be regarded wholly without a trembling disquietude—would she not be oppressed at any resemblance of feature or disposition between her child and its father, lest the dreaded fate should likewise descend to it? After all she had undergone—so physically sensitive and fearful as she was by nature—could she earnestly desire his recovery without a secret terror at the idea of being again with him in solitude, and at his mercy?

And for poor Tremlett! what fate was in store for him? I saw nothing but a life-long gloomy vista of alternate dejection and irritability. Some of my patients were easy enough to please or amuse—a smile and kind word, a flower, a picture, a few bonbons, or even a cigar or pinch of snuff would satisfy many; permission to keep a favourite animal, or pursue some particular caprice, would delight others; but nothing pleased him; and he was especially unfortunate in one respect—his peculiar form of insanity had a tendency to deprive him of sympathy, and even create aversion.

It cannot have escaped the observation of a cursory visitor in a lunatic ward how many of the patients, from the violent maniac down to the helpless idiot, are the objects of caresses and of regard, both from their attendants and their fellow-sufferers. No consolation of this kind ever came to him; neither was he capable of enjoying it if it had: indeed, with such as he became, the strictest guard is imperative, lest the temper of the attendant should give way, and, forgetting that

the sins which exasperate him are but the inevitable result of the most unhappy form of madness, he should treat his charge with unmerited severity. To obviate this I kept Mr. Tremlett as much as possible under my own eye, and selected for him a servant who was not only thoroughly good-tempered, but also excessively phlegmatic.*

Lawrence Tremlett had been with me about five months, when I was asked whether change of scene and removal to another asylum might not be of service, since his malady seemed so intractable. I was strongly disposed not only to consent, but even to urge it. He was a very great anxiety to me, and I had no reason to think him at all nearer recovery. Firmness and judicious restraint were more necessary to him than anything else, since his physical health was pretty good: provided he was cared for in these respects, it mattered little

* I prefer this sort of attendant for those patients commonly termed "aggravating;" they keep their temper better than those of a higher order of intelligence, who lose heart by over anxiety. It has been said, and not untruly, that the men in charge of lunatics, who sympathize most keenly with the patients, often end by becoming insane.

where he was. I gave my opinion to this effect, but was almost disposed to retract when I learned his proposed guardian.

Dr. Brandling had been an old friend of the family. Being possessed of an easy fortune, he had never been under the necessity of practising his profession actively, and for the last fifteen years had withdrawn from it entirely: he had in a most kindly spirit, and certainly without any view of pecuniary advantage, offered to receive Tremlett as his sole inmate, and to devote his time entirely to him.

Now Brandling was a most benevolent man, single-minded and tender-hearted. It was suspected that the real reason of his ceasing to practise, was because he never could bear to see pain, or to inflict it even when necessary. The very sight of suffering made him shudder, and no emergency could drive him into a harsh measure, or what had to him the appearance of it.

For all these reasons it was improbable that he was quite equal to the management of the insane; and I could not conceive that he would have

that firmness and penetration required to combat Mr. Tremlett's vagaries, or the judicious incredulity to defeat his inventive cunning and turn a deaf ear to his ready untruthfulness. At the same time it is always a delicate task for a medical man to object to the removal of a patient, and cannot be done without urgent reason. My time was already more occupied with Mr. Tremlett than was convenient; and I felt that I was not doing justice to the others under my care. Therefore, all things considered, I transferred him without regret, though not wholly without anxiety.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONSCIENCE AND CASUISTRY.

MORE than two years passed away, and having no intelligence of either doctor or patient, I concluded that all was going on as before. I had had very little spare time, and being just then much less frequently in town, I had nearly lost sight of the Carnegies. One day, happening, quite accidentally, to take up a newspaper, I observed that an inquiry by authority was to be made on the state of mind of Lawrence Christopher Tremlett, Esq., an alleged lunatic, and that much interest was excited as to the result, considerable property being at stake.

On the same night Dr. Brandling called upon me in a very perturbed state of mind, and verified the truth of the newspaper statement, adding that he was summoned to give evidence, and that nothing had so disturbed him during a life

of fifty years. In fact, the bare idea of appearing in a court of justice completely upset him. He had the most exaggerated ideas of the power of counsel, the obstinacy of juries, the severity of judges, and some very curious articles of faith concerning the natural malignity of lawyers; their diabolical ingenuity in making a witness contradict himself, together with their propensity to browbeat and perplex generally all adverse parties.

Whether his opinions were formed from any unhappy passages in his own experience, I cannot say, but the prospect before him weighed like an incubus. I believe, if he had been summoned to appear in the torture room of the Inquisition, he could hardly have felt more apprehension. With a conscientious desire to speak the truth, he so thoroughly distrusted his own capacity for ascertaining what it was, that he appeared for ever uncertain and faltering in all he said and did. He declared that he already anticipated a public vote of censure, and a possible indictment for perjury.

“They will ask me to swear that Tremlett is insane,” he said.

“Well, swear it if you think he is,” was my reply. “I suppose you did, and do.”

“Oh, yes; but to swear positively that he is insane! how can I know that? How can I be so certain of the state of another man’s mind that I can take oath as to its condition?”

“But he *was* insane, to the best of your judgment?”

“Yes, but——”

“Then swear he was, to the best of your judgment.”

“I might do that certainly. Yes, I think I will. But if they ask me for my reasons?”

“Well, give them, Dr. Brandling. Of course you have them?”

“I would rather not; they would be entirely unintelligible to an unprofessional audience,” he said, deprecatingly.

“But, my dear sir, that won’t help you: you will have to give them, probably.”

“I always endeavour to bear on my mind the

possibility that I am wrong," he proceeded ; " and if I am so, as respects the insanity of Mr. Tremlett, it follows that my reasons will be equally incorrect."

I was really losing patience.

" My dear Dr. Brandling, this will never do ; if you are always putting your motives and your words under a moral microscope in this fashion, you will end by losing your head entirely in the witness-box. You are as certain of the truth of your opinion as you can be of anything, or I suppose you would not have consented to keep Mr. Tremlett under restraint. Have you any proof satisfactory to yourself that you exist, and that you are yourself, and no one else ? None, surely, except your own consciousness, and the evidence of your senses : let the same simple mode serve to guide you in this matter."

He was silenced, but not convinced.

" How did he seem while he was with you ?" I asked.

" Oh, he was a very troublesome charge, I assure you. No money should induce me to

receive him again. I could not keep a fowl or animal about me, he was so destructive ; and then he was so perverse and untruthful in many ways. For a long time I made a point of believing all he said."

"Did you?" I replied. "You would hardly find that answer, I suspect."

"No, I did not. I might have dismissed one hundred servants before one could be found to please him. He was several times exceedingly violent to one poor fellow who was in delicate health."

"Hardly a fit attendant!" I ventured to say.

"Perhaps not; but he was a very amiable man, and Tremlett had really laid such serious complaints respecting the want of temper in the three preceding ones, that I thought it my duty to secure that point, and overlook a minor deficiency. But, however, he was more outrageous with this man than ever."

"Well, Dr. Brandling, he is not responsible : it is part of his disease ; and a very unfortunate part it is."

“Very true. Do you know Mr. Mainwaring, at whose instance the inquiry is instituted ?

“No,” I said ; “what sort of a man is he ?”

“I don’t much like him, but I may be wrong. There is a very ill feeling between the cousins, I think. I suspect but for the death of Tremlett’s son, Mainwaring would not have stirred in the matter. He began to come to see him at my house about that period, and once nearly got his neck broken.”

“How was that ?”

“I had advised Mr. Mainwaring not to trust his cousin too far ; but I suppose he had forgotten the caution — at any rate, they were walking together on a terrace wall ; Mr. Mainwaring happened to turn his head, and he says that Tremlett struck him backwards instantly. He fell upwards of eleven feet, and hurt himself a good deal. Tremlett declared it was an accident, and that his cousin walked straight over the terrace ; but that was not a likely tale. Besides, the attendant who was watching him from a distance

assures me that he saw Tremlett raise his arm, and tilt the other over from behind."

"It is very much resembling his usual style of doing things. I should not like to have the responsibility of setting him at large. Where is his wife, and what is her feeling on the subject? I remember thinking that she suffered much from the nervous terror with which her husband's conduct had inspired her."

"I have not seen her lately; but though she is thoroughly aware how dangerous he is, I suspect she dislikes Mr. Mainwaring to the full as much as Tremlett does."

"Very natural in a wife and a mother; she could not do otherwise."

"Of course Mainwaring stands in a very invi-dious position towards them both. I told him so, and said I wondered he did not give it up. But he declared that it was his duty, and that he did it for her sake."

"He is the next heir, I think, is he not? Ah! Dr. Brandling, self-interest sometimes sharpens the sense of duty wonderfully."

“ It does in this case, I fancy.”

“ Did Mr. Tremlett ever speak of his wife ?”

“ He often said that no punishment would be bad enough for her if she wished him to be kept under restraint ; and for that reason I never answered any of his numerous questions about her.”

“ That is well ; and I should earnestly advise that she should be kept in the background throughout the inquiry. Nothing is so painful as to see a wife obliged to give evidence of that distressing kind against a husband ; and with his memory for injuries, it might become very serious afterwards.”

“ Yes, he never forgets.* However, it is not intended to summon her, though Mr. Mainwaring was very pertinacious in desiring it.”

“ Ah !” I said. “ Well, I think that is all, Dr. Brandling.”

“ But suppose I am asked to define insanity, what can I say ? ” he recommenced.

* Many psychologists affirm that a very retentive memory is rarely accompanied by a powerful imagination, or a comprehensive mind ; and *vice versa*, that they are, to a certain extent, incompatible.

“ Say what you think, of course.”

“ But there is no definition yet made that is not open to objection; and how foolish I shall look if I say I can’t give one!”

“ I cannot advise you,” I said, fairly out of patience. “ Stay, you had better talk over the matter with some legal friend; he will give you better counsel than I can, and will show you that it is not such a very formidable thing after all.”

“ I think it would be much better if you appeared also.”

“ I don’t,” I said, shortly, for I hated the idea in my heart quite as much as he did.

“ Well, we shall see,” he said; and I felt some distrust of him as I wished him good-night.

CHAPTER IX.

INTERVIEWS.

SHORTLY afterwards I had an interview with Mr. Mainwaring, which produced a very unpleasing impression on my mind. He was a man not altogether disagreeable at first, but at the second glance he was a good deal so, at least in my eyes:—he had a narrow forehead, which sloped away rapidly, a long head, very high towards the coronal region, and overhanging brows, beneath which were a pair of cold, keen, implacable eyes. His features were delicate and well formed, the complexion that of a man who had tried his health in various climates, and his manners were impressed with that air of authority which distinguishes the Anglo-Indian, and is the effect of long residence with an inferior race.

It was a very rainy night; he threw off his

military cloak, roughly shook the wet from it, and flinging it on one side, entered at once upon his errand. His voice surprised me, it contrasted so much with his haughty manner; it was low, clear, and exceedingly musical.

“I have come, doctor, to consult you about this sad affair of my poor cousin. I have the highest accounts of your ability in this branch of disease, and your devotion to it.”

It is an odious thought that the older we grow the more we distrust our fellow-creatures. I knew that my fame never had, and probably never would attain to a distressing brilliancy; and the *quid pro quo* instantly suggested itself. What was I supposed to be able to give in return for this gross flattery? It was not etiquette for me to make the inquiry pointblank, so I bowed and waited.

“You had, I believe, the charge of him during the first few months; indeed, I think it is to you we are indebted for first detecting the lamentable state of his mind. Will you oblige me by giving me the particulars of the attack?”

I am no lawyer, and had no reason to assign why I should refuse to comply with so simple a request; so I gave him an outline, to which he listened with the deepest attention.

“Very, very sad,” he remarked, slowly: “it is mostly on account of Mrs. Tremlett that I am filling my present disagreeable position; it will not appear in this light, I am aware, in the eyes of the world.” He sighed, and resumed: “Of course you have no doubt of his insanity—could not have?”

“I had not at that time certainly; but it is several years since I have seen him.”

“Now, doctor, I am most anxious to make no false step, since I am acting for the benefit of his wife. Do you think his a curable case? I suppose you know his mother was insane?”

“Yes; I’m aware of the fact.”

“Well, that complicates the matter, does it not? It makes it less hopeful, eh?”

During these few minutes I became less and less pleased with my companion: I felt that I was in the presence of a hard-hearted, grasping,

unscrupulous man, who, being the next heir to his cousin, was extremely desirous to prove that cousin's incapacity to manage his affairs. True, what I had stated was correct; but I felt a growing disinclination to allow Mainwaring to triumph in anticipation; his thin veil of hypocrisy was additionally disgusting: so I replied,—

“ Well, I *did* not think favourably of Mr. Tremlett then; but we never dare pronounce any one incurable till death claims them, and we must hope for the best. He is young, and time works wonders.”

“ Where I came from, doctor, there was no time allowed to work wonders,” he said, with a disagreeable smile.

A singular answer! and I suppose I looked as if I thought so, for he added hastily,—

“ We Indians, you know, are a little arbitrary in our ideas, and somewhat disposed to be fatalists in theory.”

I did *not* know what this had to do with the matter, so I preserved silence.

“ I have, in fact, come to request you to have

an interview with my cousin, for the purpose of ascertaining his state of mind, and to give evidence on it. It would be very satisfactory to have your opinion; you are well acquainted with him, and the jury would feel their responsibility the more."

It was easy to see which way *he* wished the verdict to go; and I could not resist remarking, "His insanity is of a kind not easily proved except by intercourse; it would realize itself to the popular mind only if he were at liberty. I should hardly expect an ordinary jury to pronounce him insane. He knows that two and three don't make six, and he never forgets to balance his accounts. It will not be easy to induce twelve tradesmen to think him incapable of managing his affairs."

"Pray, are you aware of the groundless aversion he has for me, and the attempt he made on my life?"

"I heard that he had pushed you over a sunk wall, and that he dislikes you; but I ought to tell you that these facts are quite liable to be

translated the other way. Assume for an instant that he is sane, and aversion for the person whom he believes to be the cause of his detention, and even an exhibition of violence towards him, may be all very wrong, but also very natural. It does not require a man to be mad to do wrong."

"I've no inclination to split straws about theories, and I'm not accustomed to wrap up things in mysteries like you medical men," he said, ungraciously enough.

"Nay, Mr. Mainwaring, unless rumour sadly belies, an official life rather inculcates—what shall we call it—a frank reserve?"

"I hope, however, doctor, that you will consent to examine him, and give evidence."

"I am willing to do so, if necessary."

"Very good; then I may cite you as a witness? If only I can do any good to that poor lady," he added, hypocritically.

"I'm sure you would sacrifice your own feelings to that, my dear sir," I rejoined, cheerfully, determined to let him see that I understood his game.

He held out his hand, and I gave him mine, which he retained in a friendly manner, observing, “It’s no secret, doctor, that you thought ill of his case, you know.”

“Well, my dear sir, if you knew it, why ask me so many unnecessary questions?”

“Ha, ha! I only tell you, doctor, because it would be a pity that you should appear mistaken; a professional blunder is always an awkward thing for a man to get over. However, I dare say you have judged correctly. I hear the highest character of your place, and you may depend on my mentioning your name when I have an opportunity.”

“You are very good,” I replied; “but, of course, I can but report as I see. I *did* think unfavourably of Mr. Tremlett’s recovery, but I shall be too glad to find myself wrong. Talk of a professional blunder, Mr. Mainwaring,—no patronage could help me there, not even yours; and it would be a greater misfortune to judge a sane man to be a lunatic, than to pronounce a madman sane.”

“ Well, have it your own way, doctor,” he said, with some temper. “ Examine him, and you will have notice when to appear. This I will say, however, that I don’t believe there are human beings in any asylum half so mad as the doctors who have charge of them.”

“ That creates mutual sympathy,” I said; “ however, I’ll make my report.”

“ And I trust it will be for the best for all parties,” he remarked, significantly.

“ Indeed I do; and that we may find your cousin re-established, and in his sound mind,” I replied, maliciously.

And so we parted, I think I may say mutually ill pleased with each other.

In consequence of this interview I obtained permission to visit Mr. Tremlett. Requisite as this part of one’s duty is sometimes, it is nearly always an unpleasant one to fulfil; and when I entered the room he received me not in a very friendly manner. I imagined he knew the purport of my visit; nor was I deceived, for after a couple of sentences he said abruptly,—

“ So you have come to make me out mad—eh, doctor ? ”

“ On the contrary, I shall be too glad to find out that you have recovered,” I said, and endeavoured to lead the conversation on to other subjects.

A great change, or perhaps I should say a great advance in disease, was visible, in my opinion: he no longer appeared to have those oscillations of gentleness and fierceness, those spasms and contests between the sane and insane part of his nature, which I had formerly noticed. The mosaic was welded into an indistinguishable mass, and seemed to have resolved itself into a chronic maliciousness, a settled, active cunning, and the physical signs had kept pace in proportion. His voice was harsh and cracked —his eyebrows habitually corrugated, and his glance always oblique. His complexion was of an unearthly leaden hue, his nails colourless, and gnawed down to the quick. His hair had lost all its gloss and brightness, and looked dull and dry. If one could imagine hair half shrivelled by

fire, his appeared to be so. The want of elasticity in his mental condition, which soon became evident, had its counterpart in his gait and attitudes. His stoop was much more perceptible; and there was an occasional tremor about the eyelid and muscles of the face, that might or might not indicate impending paralysis. There was, in short, that which has been well defined as a *want of entirety* in the expression of the face; one half seemed different to the other. He had in a very few years grown into an old man.

He returned to the charge.

“How much does it take to prove a man mad, doctor?”

“There are many degrees between perfect health and insanity, Mr. Tremlett; few of us enjoy the *mens sana in corpore sano*. But apart from all this, how have you been since you were with me? did you find yourself tolerably comfortable with Dr. Brandling?”

He continued without noticing my question,—

“I’m a doomed man; I’m hunted by my enemies without remorse. If I am mad, who has

to answer for that? My father can do me no more harm in the flesh, I admit."

"Well, you don't expect he can in the spirit, do you?"

"I see through that," he replied, very coolly; "but you need not try to entrap me. At the same time, there *are* men who have not been thought out of their minds for believing that inveterate persecution can extend beyond the grave."

"Assuredly," I said; "but it is no remarkable proof of good sense to start such wild speculations."

"Was it by your advice that Brandling took me? because, if it was, I'll tell you that he is an old woman, not fit to govern a mouse. How I used to frighten him and Mainwaring! Mainwaring has been with you, doctor, has he not?"

"How did he procure his situation abroad?" I asked, for I found, that instead of being the examiner, I was likely to stand in the reverse position.

"He's a deep hand, as you will find: but I

dare say he has bought you over ; ” and he began to arrange his papers, which were spread on a large table before him.

“ Nay,” I said, “ remember you were my patient long before he came on the stage. Now tell me honestly, do you not think you required medical treatment ; and that you have continued to require it ?—recollect that you yourself asked for it.”

“ I never did,” he replied, angrily ; “ and if I submitted to it, it was because my father subjected me to that as well as to every other sort of indignity.”

“ I see you are busy writing, Mr. Tremlett ; have you commenced literary pursuits ? ”

“ These are the proofs of the duplicity and bad faith of the conspirators that surround me ; and the result will be the exposure of their malignity in the sight of the world. Have you come from my wife at this moment ? ”

“ No ; I have not,” I answered, truthfully enough. “ Why ask such a question ? ”

“ I hear she has declared herself one of them.”

"There is no one more anxious than your wife that you should be pronounced sane," I said, hastily.

He made a note or memorandum.

"Too quick by half, doctor. Well, as she acts, so will she be rewarded."

"In any case, Mr. Tremlett, she has been the best wife to you that ever man had."

A strangely malign smile twisted his lips.

"I shall instruct my counsel on that head," he answered, making another written memorandum.

I thought with compassion of the unfortunate girl as I looked at the wilful and perverted being before me—and it was not without apprehension that I did so. That he was trying to hide some scheme or thought from me I well knew, for he studiously avoided meeting my eye, and preserved the same sinister, ungracious aspect, almost turning his back on me, as if the sight of me were insupportable.

I essayed to lead him to converse on other things, and succeeded, though only for a very

limited space of time. He talked of his pecuniary concerns sensibly enough; indeed, in the matter of pounds, shillings, and pence, he evinced a vicious acuteness that amounted to greediness—certain schemes he alluded to respecting some improvements on his property were rational and practical, and if they were not remarkable for long-sightedness or an enlarged intelligence, they could at least bear favourable comparison with those of some not undistinguished economists of the present day.

But he soon recurred to the first subject, and spoke of the impending inquiry, as one that all England was regarding with anxiety. He asked me whether, if a man were pronounced insane, he would be held responsible for his actions.

“That quite depends on circumstances,” I replied, guardedly. “If any particular crime be the result of insanity, of course there is no responsibility: but don’t imagine that a madman, who chooses to rely on his madness, can commit crimes with impunity.”

“You don’t state the case well, doctor,” he

said, with a quick sidelong glance. "If I am to be deprived of my liberty, I gain in other respects ; you cannot deceive me about that. Supposing you and I were each to punish our greatest enemy, you would be hanged and I shouldn't." He laughed, but the laugh had a hollow, unpleasant sound ; and then he bent over his papers, apparently disinclined to prolong the interview.

Some further attempts on my part were responded to unwillingly, and were unproductive of any marked result. I rose to go ; as I did so, I caught sight of some sketches, and, stretching forward, I took them up before he could conceal them.

"You have been drawing some very ugly pictures," I said, coolly.

"They are not my doing," he returned directly, though the ink was hardly dry on them.

I continued to examine them. They exhibited human figures, principally women, in every stage of suffering ; some borne away by demons—others laid dead on the ground, and one or two beheaded, or otherwise disfigured.

“I did not know you had so much talent; they are rather rough, and the drawing a little false; but I wonder you don’t choose pleasanter subjects.”

“I choose what pleases me,” he said, raising his voice with considerable irritation; “and, remember, my word is as good as yours, and that I shall contradict any lies you repeat about me;—besides, you have no witnesses. I shall triumph over you all yet.”

“Come, come,” I said, “shake hands, and don’t vex yourself; and don’t abuse me, for I tell you fairly it is waste of breath; I’m used to it.”

He put his hand in mine not very amicably, and thus we parted. I now had leisure to review the whole affair.

No; there was no improvement that I could discern, but the contrary. If I had wished to sketch an imaginary case, where such a malady should approach in its most insidious form, I had only faithfully to describe Lawrence Tremlett. There were all the old characteristics, but more strongly defined. His memory was not

materially shaken—not, indeed, so much as I had expected; but it seemed to take note of little beyond his personal grievances. There was the same determined egotism visible in all he said and did, the same absorbed attention to the internal man and utter indifference to the outer world:—there was the same absence of all comparison between what others thought and what he did, which forms such a conspicuous feature in mental derangement.*

He imagined that the wrongs and sufferings of Mr. Tremlett attracted the attention of all the world. To his warped and distorted vision all mankind were the persecutors, himself the victim. Neither did the style of his sketches escape my notice; his cruelty to animals was always a peculiar trait. Had it increased and intensified, until it had become absorbed by delight in the contemplation of possible human suffering? and how long would pen-and-ink delineations content him?

* These symptoms have been repeatedly noticed and commented on by our modern medical psychologists: such as Winslow, Monro, Guislan, Noble, Bucknill, &c.

From this date I made up my mind without hesitation to give testimony as to what I conceived respecting his state. I was so clear in my own mind that he was insane—and that, so far from improving, he was rapidly becoming incurable—that I banished all reluctance from a sense of duty, and at once made notes on the interview to assist my memory, if needful.

I need hardly say that the position of a medical witness is not in any case one to be envied in our profession;—but when a physician is called upon to give evidence upon abstract questions where the best authorities differ considerably, it becomes still less so. Add to this that there existed then, and does even now, a strong prejudice in the minds of ordinary juries, and of the public generally, against those who are termed “experts” or “specialists,” and it will be conceded that my reluctance was not an unnatural sentiment.

If a man has lived in a particular country for twenty years, in the eyes of many this fact appears the very cause why he should be the most one-sided witness; and if a man has devoted himself to

one branch of study for the same length of time, it is occasionally urged that he must therefore, of all others, be the most cramped in his views, and least competent in his judgment concerning it. Of course there is a certain amount of truth in this theory; and the very fact of its sounding paradoxical, invests it with a charm to minds in search of the original rather than the true. Still, severe and continuous study is the only method recognized of attaining to real knowledge, and experience is the only mode of learning to direct that knowledge aright. If we once grant that extensive practice loads the mind with prejudice, and that the more we learn the less we know, we contradict the testimony of all ages.

After all, when a man is ill, and gets once thoroughly frightened about himself, his cry is always for "the best advice:" for "the man who has most studied that particular complaint, and has been most successful in its treatment." He forgets to ask whether the celebrated doctor is a specialist, or no.

Again, a medical man is often ill qualified as

a witness from this cause : he is educated to notice those minute and almost imperceptible changes in the gesture, glance, speech, and expression, which are rather to be felt than described. Irritability, anxiety, impatience, causeless depression, paroxysms of anger, fearfulness, wavering attention, bad dreams—all these are to him so many pregnant indications of the direction which the disease may have taken ; and, guided by them, he silently decides on his plan of treatment. The greater his acuteness of observation, and his skill in distributing to each minute symptom its due weight and value, the more certain, humanly speaking, will be his success. Though he has strong reasons for all this, yet he does not put them into words ; there is rarely any necessity for so doing ; or if there be, as in the case of a consultation, he is not called on to do so with that rapidity and publicity which are required in open court. He may be of that order of intellect which can link events clearly together, and reason logically ; but it must be in his own fashion, and at his own pace ;—he is

not accustomed to constant interruption and interrogation, which only tend to confuse him ; and some capacities of singular grasp and profundity have also a certain slowness and cumbrousness in their movements, which are rendered apparent when they are suddenly required to act with rapidity.

Precisely in proportion to his intelligence and conscientiousness, he is inclined to advocate the theory which he conceives to contain the most truth, rather than the one that is least open to objection or cavil ; and he is apt to feel fluttered and amazed to hear what he stated in good faith, as the result of earnest thought and long experience, attacked by the opposing counsel (who herein, nevertheless, only performs his duty towards his client,) as being perfectly novel or entirely exploded ; as simple empiricism or pure theory ; as entailing licence, or outraging the liberty of the subject ; as differing from all medical authorities, or else as being offensive to the views of every man of common sense. He torments himself with the idea that if he had

been allowed to explain this, or to add to that—to say in what sense, to what extent, in what circumstances, under what combinations, his opinion or admission was supposed to apply—that he would then have been properly understood and his statement have had the desired effect.

If in this frame of mind he is recalled for re-examination, the chances are, that he damages his evidence materially, or perhaps contradicts it *in toto*, by his over anxiety to guard his former statements from being misinterpreted. In his eagerness to set himself right with the jury, he forgets which is the friendly counsel and which the adverse, and mistakes friends for foes. Perhaps he is considerably misled by the fact that the adverse counsel, who is quietly getting out of him all that is necessary for his case, wears a smiling and kindly countenance; while his own advocate, baffled and annoyed by the failure of an important witness, betrays it by a perceptible change of expression—unless, indeed, he is a very practised hand.

At last the unfortunate witness is permitted to retire, which he does, half out of his wits with vexation, and sensible that he has made a mistake, but unable to rectify it. He remembers, with unutterable harass, that he has heard publicly proclaimed in the strongest manner all the reasons why he should be looked on as an interested, an ignorant, or a self-contradicted witness, and his testimony be received with reserve or incredulity.*

* Since the above was written, I chanced on a rather pleasant and *à propos* remark in the pages of a very charming moralist of the present day. He makes one of his characters say, "Medical men are certainly most intelligent persons. They dislike us lawyers, I suspect, because we often succeed in bothering them thoroughly when we get them into a witness-box; but I do not return the dislike."—*Friends in Council*. 2nd Series.

CHAPTER X.

DR. BRANDLING TAKES COUNSEL'S OPINION.

SHORTLY after this I called one evening on Dr. Brandling, with the intention of informing him of my interview with Mr. Tremlett, and the opinion I had conceived respecting him, and also to express my willingness to give evidence in support of it.

I found him seated in an easy chair on one side of the fire, with an expression of extreme mental disquiet legibly depicted on his features: opposite to the fire was a young gentleman whose attitude proclaimed him perfectly at ease with himself and the world. His chair was tilted back with great dexterity, to permit his feet to repose on the chimney-piece; his hands were in his trowsers-pocket; and between his teeth he held an enormous cigar, from which

ascended clouds of smoke. He took it out of his mouth for an instant, the better to gaze at me, I suppose.

Dr. Brandling rose and shook hands with me; but his hand was clammy and cold as he returned my grasp.

“I—I was following your advice, you see,” he stammered out; “and this young gentleman is good enough to inform me of my probable line of duty, doctor—Mr. O’Ferrall, but perhaps we had better stop, Mr. O’Ferrall,” he added, rather imploringly.

“Not on my account by any means,” I said. “I shall, perhaps, also profit by your friend’s counsel.”

Mr. O’Ferrall gave me his hand with a cordiality that was difficult to resist; and though he preserved a certain gravity, a pair of sharp black eyes were dancing in his head with amusement.

“Sit down in that chair, doctor,” he said, with the utmost affability, in a rich mellow voice, with a strong touch of Irish accent. I did as desired. “Have a cigar? No; you don’t

smoke. Very well, then, I shall proceed to make you more comfortable, Dr. Brandling. It is well to know what the worst consequences could be in case of misadventure in a witness. Unfortunately for this particular class of cases I can only, at this moment, enumerate three; but they will be sufficient to explain what I mean. You will, of course, be on your oath, and being on your oath, if you make an untrue statement, or swear to two facts incompatible with each other, you will be liable to three things: you might be indicted for perjury, an offence entailing heavy punishment—always bear that in mind. Second: If the man whom you have deprived of liberty for so long a time—how long, is it, Dr. Brandling?"

"I hardly know—two years, I think," replied that gentleman, nervously.

"Ah, thank you! it is always advisable to keep your memory alive as to dates, it prevents the evil appearance of hesitation. Two years. Well, if he be vindictively disposed, he might commence an action for conspiracy against you.

I do not say he would gain it, observe, but he might commence it, and that would be disagreeable. Third: If you make a professional blunder of any magnitude, why, they can't prosecute you for that; but the newspapers will show you up, and tear your reputation into little pieces, and your income too, though that is no matter, fortunately, to you," he added, graciously. "You don't practise, and you have a fortune: therefore you would go away for a year or two, and when it was blown over you would come back again none the worse. All will be 'forgiven and forgotten,' as the advertisements of the disconsolate assure us. Very good: now you must keep these three probabilities well in mind, or, at any rate, two of them."

"I wish," exclaimed poor Dr. Brandling—"I wish I had never taken the unfortunate man into my keeping. I've never had a moment's peace since he entered my house. I know I shall be held up to ridicule and indignation,—and what for?"

"Exactly—they will find out what for," said O'Ferrall, with complacency.

“It appears to me,” I said, “that Mr. O’Ferrall is exaggerating matters.”

“It is all for his good,” returned the Irishman, unabashed. “I am contemplating possibilities. Now don’t disturb the thread of my ideas; but let us have some more coal on the fire, doctor.”

I was almost provoked to see how meekly Brandling rose and obeyed the behest of his tormentor.

“I wish——” he recommenced, as he sat down again.

“Ah, now don’t you: I know what you wish. But let me have my say, since you have had yours. My wish is that you should learn to distinguish between the counsel that means you harm, and the one who means you well. In fact, know which side you are on.”

“But how am I to know men I never saw before?”

“Why, get some one to tell you. One wig is so like another wig, perhaps, you will say. Don’t be frightened by a bullying man; but, ah! don’t

be beguiled by a coaxing, flattering one, for it's he that will be trying to circumvent you; whereas perhaps your own man will not look his sweetest when you flounder, or prove just half a dozen things you needn't and shouldn't."

"I don't mean to flounder," said Brandling, bravely.

"No, of course you don't." Brandling lighted up. O'Ferrall continued: "And so I've heard many a fellow say, who has made a terrible mess of it in the end, notwithstanding. But now, I'll never finish unless you let me proceed regularly. You see, at the first start, your position is an invidious one, for you have an interest in proving your patient insane."

"No, I have not, I assure you," said Brandling.

"Well, the counsel will put it so, at any rate; and the judge, not knowing your disinterestedness, will believe him. It is inevitable that they should think so, and remember it against you."

"And the jury will remember no less, I hope,

that the counsel is paid to prove that we are wrong and he is right ; so we are evens," replied Brandling, with some heat.

" Now, I'll tell you what, doctor,—you will get through if you stick to it like that, and don't lose your head in the witness-box."

" Well, Mr. O'Ferrall," I said, " if you don't show your clients the way to success in a more encouraging fashion than this, you will hardly fill your exchequer."

" Ah ! but I'm doing this for love. Brandling hasn't said anything about a fee," he replied, plaintively.

" I'm sure," said Brandling, in a fidget, " I shall be very happy, my dear friend."

" Ah, now, be quiet. Sure I'm only poking fun at you. But let me go on, or I'll never get to the end of my exposition. I must warn you about cross-examination, which is a device of the evil one to sink the guilty deeper still, and to entrap the tongue of the innocent. They will ask you every sort of question, mixing the important with the unimportant, till, for the life

of you, you can't distinguish the head from the tail ; and then when you get careless, or grow bothered entirely, they'll slip in the grand question, trying to take you unawares, and make you spoil the whole case by one little admission."

"I'll not go. I'll get a certificate—I'll stop in bed."

"No use," returned his tormentor. "Suppose they send a posse to visit you in your sick room, and take it all down in writing. Eh? There's no getting out of a signed deposition. And you'll only remember the mistakes you have committed and the contradictions you have put your name to when the deputation has retired and left you in your lonely bed ; out of which you may not rise on account of your certificate of illness."

"It's all nonsense!" I exclaimed. "Mr. O'Ferrall, what *is* the use?"

"Ah! now—" with an air of horror,—"whom will you trust, Dr. Brandling : the one who's showing you all the snares that beset your thorny path—and who should know them better than I do?—

or the one who's trying to make light of your misfortune and delude you into a fatal confidence?"

"Doctor, you must let me hear the worst," said Brandling, with the solemnity of despair. "You must, indeed; I can bear it."

I saw that O'Ferrall would have his fun, and that I need not interfere, though the diversion was anything but fun to Brandling,—so I consented to hold my tongue under protest.

O'Ferrall continued: "Well, as I said, they will cross-examine. Now there's a deal in manner; don't let any one hurry you; if you are bothered, stop till you can collect your thoughts. They will be impatient,—good, let them wait; but don't make the judge wait if *he* asks a question. In such cases answer the judge instantly and loudly;—he will like it, and think how much better he gets at it than the counsel. But don't let yourself be bothered."

"I'm certain to be bothered."

"I think you are, too; you must prepare in advance. Possibly they will ask you questions difficult to answer on the spur of the moment.

For instance, What *is* insanity? Now I ask you as a friend, have you made up your mind upon that point? Yes or no?"

"No; that is, yes—or rather, I'm not quite sure."

"Exactly as I thought. You are not quite sure. Naturally they will exclaim, 'Here is a man come to give evidence on oath about a subject on which he has not arrived at any opinion!'"

"The truth is," said Brandling, who was really a studious and conscientious man, "I have never yet met with any single definition which perfectly satisfied me. I could say that, you know."

"And a very honest answer; but of course they will urge—'Here is one of the craft avowing that the point on which the whole thing hinges is one on which various opinions are entertained, and no two of them alike.'"

"That might be asserted of some of the judges, O'Ferrall," I remarked. "Is it scandal to affirm that you may procure from consulting barristers

legal opinions differing in every conceivable manner?"

O'Ferrall indulged in a long laugh. "You have me there; but do you see it's not the judges, nor yet the barristers, that we have in the witness-box—it's the doctor. They'll perhaps want your standard of sanity. No, you don't know what that is—which of us do? You will testify that the alleged lunatic was in the habit of standing on his head (I'm putting an extreme case, mind); and they will reply, 'Then you consider the fact of a man's standing on his head a proof of lunacy?' Remembering the clown at Astley's, you will hesitate to be positive about this; and they will demand, 'If it were no proof, or not a reliable one, what was the use of advancing it?'"

"What am I to do then?" said Brandling.

"I advise you to prepare, under legal advice, of course, a little catechism of definitions, and short, concise replies, and bolt them out as opportunity offers. But if you are asked an opinion not in your list, or you have forgotten it, you

had better give two—one on each side, by way of guard; for silence looks bad; and saying, ‘I don’t know,’ looks worse.”

“If I forget my catechism, I’m equally likely to forget any theory I ever heard of; and the end of it will be, I shall forget my own name, and my business there at all.”

“That would be serious, and yet not impossible,” said O’Ferrall.

I will not say this ridiculously exaggerated account made me feel any more comfortable; there was a substratum of truth in it as in all other extreme views; but I thought this mode of demonstration not particularly well calculated to reassure a timid witness.

“You had better prepare such a catechism, O’Ferrall,” I said.

“And I’ll be happy to do it,” replied he, nothing disconcerted. “Meanwhile, one more point, and I’ll finish you for the present. They may invite you to give your own account of matters. Now never you forget what I say to you emphatically—*don’t*. It’s bad enough to be made to dis-

gorge what you know in bits; but it's sheer folly to pour it out for them to turn over at their ease. If you let yourself be entrapped into *that*, you are a lost man."

"I don't see that. I should give a true account."

"Of course you would; but consider how difficult it is to relate anything exactly as it occurred. Try to give a true and accurate description of the doctor coming into this room; which foot he advanced, in the first instance; how far from the table you were when you took his hand; who spoke first; what was his reply; in what words; and in what order did they occur. I defy you to tell the same tale twice over, without materially altering some particulars. Very well; then reflect—you will be asked to narrate what took place sixteen or eighteen months ago. How will you do it? You will say what you recollect; they will demand how Mr. Tremlett tied his handkerchief, or what he ate for his dinner; whether he liked his bread toasted and his eggs underdone, or *vice versa*? You will strain

yourself frightfully to remember whether there was any madness in his orders on those points; and while you are trying to satisfy yourself and them, they will go back to an old question, which they forget, or pretend to want more clearly;—or they will hypocritically ask you to amend your evidence, and you will tell it all over again quite differently—and *then* where are you? You'll be safe to call forth some remark, such as, ‘The principal witness contradicts his own statements,’ or if you manage to give it accurately—and you won’t,” he added, emphatically—“they will inquire how it happens you remember it; whether you talked it over with a friend or wrote it down on the spot? And *what* will you reply?”

Mr. O’Ferrall grew inspired with his subject, and proceeded to pile up miseries with keen enjoyment. “And then,” he exclaimed, starting up, and commencing a declamation, “‘I ask you, intelligent gentlemen of the jury, could any of you undertake to repeat word for word a chance conversation, of which you made no par-

ticular note at the time, with a customer, or a patient, or a neighbour?' and the more stupid they are, the more they feel they couldn't, and, *pari ratione*, they will conclude you couldn't either. If you say you wrote it down, by way of extra good proof, you will be asked your reason for so doing; and it will be inferred that you were even then preparing testimony; or they will observe, 'This gentleman has thought it advisable to learn his lesson by rote.' I leave you to judge what the impression will be then. Now I think I've said nearly all I need say."

"A good deal more, in my opinion, Mr. O'Ferrall;" for, in spite of being amused, I was annoyed.

"Oh! I never spare myself. I'd rather do too much than too little for a friend, any day. Another cigar. Good-night. Think well over what I have told you, Brandling, before you go to bed; you will have a good night's rest, and wake with it all clearly in your head."

We heard his firm step along the hall, and his loud, jovial voice, apparently carrying on a lively conversation with the servant who

opened the door, and then there was silence, and I was left alone with Brandling in his misery.

It is a painful thing when the right man is in the wrong place. Perhaps the case of the insane demands, more than anything else, moral courage, and a calm, almost a phlegmatic temper. Here was poor Brandling, full of goodness of heart, and kindly and conscientious sense of duty, suffering misery, past, present, and to come, from fears and perturbations about that which would not cost one moment's uneasiness to any one blessed with a tougher and less sensitive nature.

As the best mode of consolation, I told him quietly what I thought of Mr. Tremlett, how decided my opinion was, and that I had determined to volunteer my evidence.

“ You have taken a load from my mind, I assure you. I began to think I was presumptuous in appearing alone to endeavour to substantiate my belief. If you take the same view as I do, it will no longer present itself to me

either as so formidable or so repulsive ; ”— and so we parted.

I never ascertained whether he did attempt to entrench himself by means of the handbook O’Ferrall proposed compiling ; but if he did I think it failed him in the time of need.

I had earnestly desired to have no conversation with Mrs. Tremlett before the trial, seeing that my report of her husband must be utterly barren ^{*} of consolation ; but I found I could not avoid it ; and it was with a heavy heart that, at her request, I prepared to see her.

Perhaps those who have never, even for one brief moment, been entirely happy, cannot know the uttermost depths of misery ; for, after all, though each fresh agony brings fresh tears, it is the memory of that which we have lost that gives the most bitter pang.

“ Do not pity her so much,” said a very clever woman once to me, speaking of a sorrow-stricken wife ; “ she must have had much happiness to feel such terrible grief.”

It was not this which characterized Marion Tremlett. There could not be visible on her face the wreck of a lost happiness which she had never found; but I traced the record of other things in the worn and saddened creature before me. I read of over-wrought nerves and sleepless nights.

She hardly waited for me to speak, but opened the subject instantly, not without a certain trepidation, but as if she had that to say which could not be postponed.

“You know of this unholy work, doctor; Mr. Mainwaring is a wicked and unscrupulous man, and his only desire is to brand my husband for life as a madman.”

I interfered to explain that such was by no means a necessary consequence of an inquiry, even if it terminated adversely for Mr. Tremlett. No jury could pronounce upon the state of a man’s mind further than for the present moment. They cannot retard recovery, or ignore a cure; besides, the verdict is not yet given.

She hardly seemed to hear what I said; perhaps a dim conviction stole over her heart, that

to such a trial there could be but one termination.

“Mr. Mainwaring,” I continued, “can but have one motive, and that is the safety of you and yours.”

Poor thing! her lips quivered, but no tears came into her eyes.

“My baby is dead; I am, as it were, alone in the world. You say he has no motive; but it is only since the death of our child that he has begun this course of action. He wishes to take possession—when he has securely incarcerated my husband—and to separate me from him for ever in this world. I read all his designs in the cold, crafty expression of his eye; and what weight can one woman’s voice have against him, unless you help me? However, come what may, I will not desert my husband; the law itself shall not force me to it. Say that he is mad—the more fitting is it, then, that I should devote my remaining days to him.”

“But, my dear Mrs. Tremlett, you remember why you last sought my assistance: what hap-

pened then might occur again. It is my duty to tell you that your life would not be safe unless he were materially better, and that you ought not needlessly to risk it."

"Far more need that I should offer it up," she replied, drearily. "I have often earnestly wished that it was I, and not Lawrence, who was afflicted. To forget myself, this world, and all that is in it, I would gladly die."

"That is very wrong, Mrs. Tremlett," I said, seriously.

"Do not condemn me for that," she replied; "for anything else, but not for that. In all this I see the avenging hand of Heaven. I have never loved Lawrence as I ought, and as I vowed to do. I married him without any affection in my heart, except that which belonged to another; yet I was resolved to do my duty to the uttermost. But God punishes guilt in thought as well as in deed. I have often prayed for death; but death does not come for the asking. Each time I caught my husband's strange, suspicious, mournful glance on me, I felt that he had detected my

unworthiness. My first love is—has been for long—a thing of the past; it has faded utterly away, but it has left in its stead an avenging phantom of its memory. And then a mortal coldness fell on my heart; I had no love for any one, except my child; and when that died, I saw again that I was punished. What remained for me but to cleave to the husband to whom I had bound myself?"

"We have not always our wishes under our command; but we are able to order our actions, and that determines our responsibility," I said, hoping to console her.

"With man, but not with God. Perhaps I was wrong from the first. I did not understand all I had taken upon myself for long after. I was naturally a coward, and miserably weak, and I fear I always shall be." (Still no word of blame for her mother.) "What right had I to deceive George Carnegie—to waste his time and his hopes, to fail him so sorely at last? And as I wronged him, so I wronged my husband. I gave him my obedience, and an empty profession, to find too

late that I had deceived myself. Yet I tried—oh! how earnestly I tried—and I was beginning to hope for success, when his insanity first began to declare itself openly: a living death! his mind has gone where I can neither guide nor follow, and years and years of vain longings can give no chance for me to make reparation. My vacillating treachery is recorded, and the time has been too short to efface it. Never, never more."

"You accuse yourself too severely," I replied, much shocked; "the doctrine of special providences is a dangerous one. It is not for us to judge, otherwise we may bear hardly on the afflicted one because of his burden, and be tempted to bow down before the successful sinner as a God-protected man."

"I have been taught that we shall be punished if we do amiss," she said, simply. "I know that I have done amiss, and I see that I am punished."

"Well, promise me that you will be guided by my advice, at any rate as far as living with your husband goes."

"I will promise nothing of the kind," she

returned, obstinately ; “ I warn you frankly that in *any* case I will not quit him. He may be mad—they may swear him so, a judge may pronounce, and a jury may confirm ; but it shall not be so to me.”

“ Do you accuse heaven ? ” I said.

“ Then let heaven give me time to repair my fault.” There was a pause, and her eyes were bent on the ground, and her hands twisted tightly together in an attitude that betrayed intense mental disquietude. She proceeded, not without some effort. “ I think this hardly the worst, but I will own all ; and then you will see I am right. I have said I am, and always have been, physically as well as mentally, a coward. When you reported to me that Lawrence had improved somewhat, the idea of his returning afflicted me with such a terror that I could not overcome it. At night I used to wake almost mad with fright, fancying he was in the room—until I found myself almost wishing that he never should come back to me. Not that I hoped he would not regain his senses. No, never that ;

but a half-recovery, the thought of another long-impending attack bursting out into furious madness—I trembled, I wept, I could not think of anything but this one dreadful subject. To remedy this I hardly knew how; so I have resolved, in sheer desperation, to place my life unreservedly in his hands. I care less for it now than I did; and from this expiation no human power shall move me."

Now in my heart, I thought she was as much disordered in mind as her husband, and quite as inaccessible to reason. So I made no direct comment, but inquired, not without some real curiosity, where Mrs. Lackingham was, and how far her mother approved of her views.

"My mother—I thought you would have heard—I have none. Did you not know she is not my own mother? I wrote in my first loneliness to entreat that I might rejoin her. She replied quite callously that for many reasons, too long to give, this could not be; that I was not her own child. She sent me proofs and papers enough; they were little needed, for I felt that

had I been her child she would have let me rest near her. I wanted no further evidence that I was alone in the world: whom have I to live for on earth?—dear mother, I love her still.” Her voice trembled excessively, a red flush stole over her brow, the veins began to swell, her eyes filled, and she burst into a passionate fit of tears.

Poor, remorseful, self-accusing penitent! I thought; how strange that you should shed tears—not for your husband, not for your child, not for yourself, but for that very unscrupulous and flinty-hearted woman, who has so unaccountably chosen to enact the farce of being your only parent!

She continued to weep convulsively, cowering down like a child, the tears oozing fast from between her slender fingers. I did not interrupt so salutary a relief to her over-wrought feelings, and left her, not sorry to do so, before I had been asked to pledge myself further to aid her views.

I lost myself in conjectures respecting Mrs.

Lackingham's real history, and for what purpose, or by what means, she had made it appear that Marion was her own child. What had she gained by it? Had she ever really loved Marion, or had she merely indulged in the not unpleasing knowledge that she had in that girl, so abjectly attached to her, one whom she could fascinate and subdue at pleasure?

After all, it was a satisfactory and natural thing that Marion Tremlett had no ties of blood with that unprincipled woman, for I have great faith in "like producing like;" and she was in every respect a contrast to her pseudo parent. She had proved herself morbidly sensitive, too tender, too yielding, rashly self-sacrificing, obstinate indeed, but not to her own gain.

And I reflected with shame that I had cruelly misjudged her at first. We ought to pronounce with humility and tenderness concerning women. If they are often an enigma past the finding out of wiser men than I am, we must, at least, recognize that even amongst the most frail there is sometimes a purity of intent, and an undying,

unquenchable spirit of self-devotion, which, demanding no return and receiving no encouragement, asks only to be allowed to sacrifice: this we look for vainly among even the best of men, as far as my experience goes.

It is recorded of a certain Mahometan doctor that, when dying, he exclaimed, “How should I not weep? and who has more reason to weep than I? Would to God that for every question decided by me, according to my own judgment, I had received so many stripes!” and though my paroxysm of humility was not so vehement as to utter the same desire, my repentance was at least as sincere.

CHAPTER XI.

DE LUNATICO INQUIRENDO.

I WAS, of course, anxious to be present throughout the inquiry, but circumstances happened to detain me; and when I entered the court the proceedings had commenced.*

Mr. Tremlett was present, I suppose according to rule, though I could not help thinking he was thereby placed in an uncomfortable and painful position, no less than the witnesses. Regarding him as a man on his trial, it was legally just, but to the medical man it seemed unkind and unwise. To me it appeared about as natural as to hold a consultation, in the presence of a patient, upon the propriety of amputating both his legs.

* I must here beg for the indulgence of such of my readers as may belong to the legal profession, should any of the proceedings or points of law in the inquiry be misinterpreted or stated incorrectly, since it was in its medical aspect alone that I was interested.

The counsel was stating the case for Mr. Mainwaring; he was interrupted for an instant by a voice which I recognized as familiar to me. I leaned forward to obtain a more accurate view, and was astonished to perceive, as junior counsel on behalf of Mr. Tremlett, George Carnegie, in full disguise of wig and gown.

It may appear strange that I had not been aware of this before, but the fact was I had not inquired about forms and ceremonies further than I thought they would affect myself; and when the opposing counsel was named, it was always Mr. —— the leader—junior counsel being considered, I presume, of minor importance.

How singular it was! Here was Carnegie pleading for the restoration of that man to society, who had once caused him so much vexation of heart and bitterness of spirit; who had been the object of his vehement dislike, had eventually proved his successful rival, and separated him for ever from the woman he loved. What strange chance had raised Carnegie up to do battle for him!

It flashed on my mind that Tremlett must have suggested it; there was a spice of cunning malignity about the idea very characteristic of him; and I wondered whether Carnegie had willingly accepted the case, or was aware of the gravity of Mrs. Tremlett's position, and that it was fully as much for her protection as for Mr. Tremlett's benefit, that Mainwaring was supported in his effort.

I learned a few hours afterwards that my conjecture was correct, that Tremlett had proposed for George Carnegie to conduct the defence; that the latter had at first positively refused, though it was represented to him as merely a case where the next of kin wished to secure the reversion of the property of a man whose eccentricity had caused him to be regarded as a lunatic; and it was not until another influence had been brought to bear, that George's resolution gave way.

At Mrs. Tremlett's personal entreaties he agreed, though not without a struggle, to use his best exertions on their side; but the struggle

was not that of the advocate, but of the man, since Mrs. Tremlett's representations were such that her sincere desire to see her husband free could not be doubted. If she did not think him too mad to live with, who should better be the judge? was George's reflection; and thus it had all come about.

The case was stated with great moderation. The circumstances and property of the alleged lunatic were detailed; his position before and after his father's death, the date of his marriage, together with sundry facts in which he had behaved differently to other gentlemen similarly circumstanced. The first attack of insanity took place in 18—; witnesses would be called to give particulars; but the result of that attack—one characterized by considerable violence—was that the safety of his wife, and those about him, was considered to be in danger; and under the proper certificates he was placed under the care of Dr. ——, with whom he remained some months.

A certain mitigation of the worst symptoms was effected by the seclusion, and by the medical

treatment which he received there ; and it was in consequence thought expedient to remove him to the care of Dr. Brandling, a gentleman who was noted for his humanity and kindness of disposition, and who, having abandoned the active pursuit of his profession, would, it was thought, be able to devote the more time and skill to the surveillance and treatment of his patient.

Mr. Tremlett remained there for more than two years, and during that time gave unequivocal signs of insanity, not only in particular instances of violence, but in his general demeanour, all of which he (the counsel) hoped to prove by competent witnesses, including his servants, attendants, the medical gentlemen who had been at different times called in, and that of his nearest male relative, the petitioner, Mr. Mainwaring.

Only one child had resulted from the marriage —a son, who died, however, before he attained five years of age.

After residing more than two years with Dr. Brandling, Mr. Tremlett contrived to effect his escape, and subsequently threatened with violence

any one who should venture to place him again under treatment. Under these circumstances Mr. Mainwaring, as next of kin, had instituted the present suit for the safe custody and protection of this gentleman. He would proceed to call witnesses.

During this rather trying relation of his case Mr. Tremlett preserved pretty nearly his usual down, furtive, cunning look. He several times glanced round the court with a half-smile, but in no instance did his eye ever rest steadily on any person.* He frowned when he first perceived me, and then honoured me with a kind of sidelong bow.

The man Jenner—who, it may be remembered, was his servant—was examined. His evidence

* There is no truer index than the eye in insanity. The terror-stricken glare of the maniac testifies to the fever and irritation of the body. See the old man who is sinking into senile dementia—he never looks with attention at near objects; it is the dim far off gaze on distant things, the sky, the horizon, mountains; it indicates that his mind is in process of extinction: it is about to leave him. The abstracted, fixed look of a melancholy man or a monomaniac is equally characteristic, it gives him what we call an air of absence. In effect his mind is not with us—it is absent, beyond our ken; it lies inert in the depths of his fixed delusions. There is also a peculiar, unsettled, shifty glance, which betrays incoherency of thought, either moral or intellectual, as in Mr. Tremlett's case.

was very simple and distinct, and he was not cross-examined. Mr. Tremlett took no more notice of him than as if he had been a stone.

I was next called, and the questions put were replied to by me to the following effect:—"I had treated Mr. Tremlett first in my medical capacity at his father's desire, in June, 18—. His state of health was unsatisfactory, both physically and mentally. I considered that disease had largely affected his judgment even then. His actions were occasionally eccentric, but his emotions and motives were far removed from the line of mental health; his dislikes were very strong and unreasonable; he entertained ideas about his father which almost amounted to fixed delusion. I thought there might exist insanity without any striking intellectual delusion; but I had not seen a case of it. Mr. Tremlett's was the nearest to it which I had met with in my experience.*

* Since then Dr. Forbes Winslow has published some admirable remarks on medico-legal evidence. He states that "positive dangerous and irresponsible insanity is often seen unassociated with any manifested delusive impression or appreciable hallucination."—Vide *Lettsomian Lectures*. No. iii.

I was aware that his mother had been insane for many years. In consequence of intelligence which fell into my hands, I visited him at — in the autumn of 18—, three years after his marriage."

I then detailed the particulars which occurred by the seaside, with which the reader is already acquainted ; they created some little sensation in court. I only glanced at George Carnegie, but I could feel that he was devouring every word I said. Tremlett still preserved his impassible exterior.

The examination continued : " I considered him at that time labouring under serious cerebral excitement, and that he was dangerous to himself and to others ; especially to those who had no means of escape—as his wife or child, for instance." Tremlett here leaned forward to whisper to his counsel, Mr. —. " From what I saw I recommended he should be placed under restraint ; he was placed under my care, and received medical treatment for more than four months ; the cerebral excitement quickly passed away, but I considered him as far from a sane mind as before."

I instanced his crying out at nights; his fits of sullenness; his refusal to eat; his ingenious cruelty to animals, and likewise to his fellow-companions, as far as he could go; his habitual and motiveless mendacity; his systematic endeavours to wound and distress the feelings of others. "When he told untruths it was not done generally to attain any object, certainly not to procure indulgence, or to avoid punishment; he seemed to take an unnecessary pleasure in distorting the most trifling facts. When remonstrated with, he never promised amendment, but most often appeared as if he did not hear what was said to him. Occasionally he laughed. He was quite competent on money matters; was able to cast up accounts, and understand business. With the single exception of his having secreted money in the crevices of the locks on one occasion, I never saw him at fault on that head. That did not affect my opinion; I still held him to be insane. Moral insanity was a term too vague to use—he was of unsound mind, because his judgment was habitually warped, his emo-

tions perverted, his impulses cruel, and his feelings callous and inaccessible to influences and motives which weighed with other men.

“ He would, I considered, be liable to a recurrence of cerebral excitement at uncertain intervals when these impulses would have full play, and if not controlled, would almost certainly be dangerous and destructive. Homicide by lunatics was as often committed under the influence of groundless terror as of a destructive impulse.

“ There might be men like him in one or two things, but no man could resemble him in *all* things, and be a sane man, in my judgment. I did not see him for more than two years, as he was removed from me when he became quieter. I informed Dr. Brandling at that time, when I relinquished my charge, that I considered him a difficult patient, owing to his extreme cunning.

“ I had had an interview with Mr. Tremlett about a fortnight before. I conversed with him, with a view to giving my judgment on his state of mind; I had been requested to do so. Whether I informed persons, whom I visited under such

circumstances, of my motives or no, would depend entirely on the nature of the case. If I thought that the knowledge that such examination was being made with a view to release, if practicable, was likely to clear an oppressed mind, or abate an excitement purely temporary, I should certainly not withhold it from the alleged lunatic. If, on the other hand, I conceived that he was concealing his delusions, I should keep it to myself. I had no option in the present instance, as Mr. Tremlett informed me almost immediately that he was aware why I came.

“I found no change for the better had taken place since I had last seen him. That of itself was not a good sign, since disease is never stationary. It argued that the morbid mental condition was becoming confirmed; the appearances of physical disease corroborated this idea; they were better marked than before.

“His sleep was habitually broken; it always was so; he used to complain both to Dr. Brandling and myself of frightful dreams. At first he used to vary, being more irascible and mischievous in

the morning than towards evening; but that distinction seemed no longer to exist. His pulse was never that of a healthy man; his complexion, and other trifles, were all indicative to me of vitiated health. He still spoke with extreme bitterness of his father; he used to do so formerly; he was under the delusion that his father had intentionally injured him, which had never been the case at any time. His father had long been dead. Among the insane, particular and unreasonable antipathies often become stronger with time. It is a feature of the disease.

“In general, an attack of insanity is marked by a total change of character; the avaricious man becomes a spendthrift; the timid bold, or the bold timid. The prospect of cure is thought to be more distant in cases where this is reversed. The exaggeration of the natural character was not a good sign; if, for instance, an eccentric man becomes more eccentric, a cruel man more cruel, in combination with cerebral disease, I should be disposed to think unfavourably of the prospect. Still more so if a temporary change

was exhibited, followed by a return to the old exaggerated type. Mr. Tremlett's maniacal attack in the first instance might be regarded in that light.*

"I had no doubt that Mr. Tremlett was then, and is now, in an unsound state of mind. Insanity might be coupled with delusions or not.

"I did not consider Mr. Tremlett free from them. His idea, for instance, respecting his father was utterly unfounded." (Mr. Tremlett here made a gesture as if about to speak, but arrested himself and began to take notes.) "His father had never tried to injure him. He also maintained generally that there was a conspiracy against his liberty; that he never had been in such a state as to require restraint; that if his wife were a consenting party to it, she deserved to die." (Mr. Tremlett here bent down his head so as entirely to conceal his features; I saw George

* Dr. Bucknill has some very valuable remarks on this point, in his *Journal of Mental Science*.—Vide also *Lectures on Insanity*, delivered at St. Luke's Hospital by Dr. Sutherland in 1855.

Carnegie watching him keenly, and I thought distrustfully.)

I proceeded: "He said so many times, and also that if he killed any one he could not be hanged, inasmuch as he was a lunatic. That sentiment was not one calculated to make me think it safe for him to be at large. I did not draw my conclusion from that solitary fact, but from a number, and also from the physical and mental state of the patient.

"In my latest conversation with him, he had expressed the same sentiments almost in the same language. I pointed out to him that that was hardly the way to convince people of his sanity, to which he replied, that it would be time enough to think of that when mankind agreed to treat him as a sane man."

Was it my fancy that Carnegie's cheek was so ashy pale, as the questions were put which produced these answers?

I took care that what I stated should be said earnestly and distinctly.

Tremlett gave a quick sidelong glance, threw

a note at counsel, and bent down his head again, apparently absorbed in writing.

My evidence was continued: "I was aware Mr. Tremlett had offered some violence to Mr. Mainwaring during his stay at Dr. Brandling's. That did not surprise me, nor that he should in the face of an utter impossibility assert it to be an accident. No doubt my life was in danger on the occasion when he had fire-arms; he was dangerous then from a paroxysm of fear, a kind of pantophobia, where extreme terror is turned into desperate daring. I considered him dangerous now, but from the operation of a different class of motives."

The counsel here resumed his seat, and I was in the act of retiring from the witness-box, when I was recalled, and told (not to my satisfaction) that the court had not dismissed me.

Mr. ——, the leader on the opposite side, rose to cross-examine me. In return to his questions I had to reply that "many symptoms of physical ailment, such as I had described, might exist, and often did, without in the slightest

degree affecting the intellect. I did not think it unnatural for Mr. Mainwaring to be regarded with enmity by Mr. Tremlett; I was aware that gentleman was heir-at-law at present. I had heard it said that madmen never denied their delusions, though they might conceal them."

Mr. Tremlett here leant back, and peered at me with a very singular expression of countenance. He made another note, which, however, was not given to his counsel, but rolled up between his finger and thumb, and committed to his waistcoat pocket. Mr. — glanced rapidly at him, and asked whether I subscribed to that doctrine just stated. I replied "that I should be entirely guided by the antecedents of the patient. If he denied his delusions and behaved in other things irrationally, I should have strong ground to suppose he was concealing them.

" My knowledge of the insanity of Mr. Tremlett's mother would not influence me in the mode of treatment when I had made up my mind as to the nature of the case, though it might assist in enabling me to arrive more quickly at

the knowledge of it. In other words, each case of insanity would be treated on its merits according to certain fixed principles. I should be more disposed to look for a return, when I knew the father or mother had been similarly affected, especially the mother.*

“I must respectfully decline to answer the question by what authority I was summoned on the occasion of the first attack;” here I handed a written reason for this refusal to the judge: for I had prepared for this in my own mind. The judge observed that the question was strictly in rule, but it would perhaps be more expedient not to press it. Mr. Tremlett knit his brows, and bent forward, placing his hand behind his ear, as if he were a little deaf, and extremely anxious to hear the reply; and then he half smiled,

* Some very interesting statistics have been made on this subject by different medical psychologists. It would appear that the children of an insane mother are more likely to inherit the malady, than of an insane father; and that the girls are more likely to be affected than the boys: the converse holds good with respect to the father transmitting it to his sons rather than to his daughters. My own observations fully accord with this view.

and passed one of his many written scraps to Mr. —

“ When Mr. Tremlett called out at night ” (I had previously given details), “ it was not with the voice of a maniac. The cry of mania was peculiar, and easily to be distinguished by a practised ear. Still I thought it was owing to insanity, that he persisted in making those noises. Sane people did not cry out at night usually; but persons might do so and be sane still. Knowing that Mr. Tremlett was insane, I was not surprised at it. He did not cry out as a maniac would, nor as a sane man would; but from an insane cunning in order to cause annoyance; and the same feeling made him cease when informed that he would be placed near my room if the noises continued.”

This terminated my evidence, and I left the witness-box with an intense feeling of relief.

The next person called was Mr. Mainwaring. His testimony was not important as to matter; but the manner of giving it produced a very untoward impression. He said that he was

aware that in default of a son he was heir-at-law, and that a son had been born, and was now dead; but that he did not know of the death till *after* these proceedings had commenced; but certainly, the commencement of them *coincided with the death*. He had thought of this line of action long before, and had mentioned it to several people, but he could not remember to whom; he had not given any positive instructions at that time.

Now it appeared to me that if Mr. Mainwaring had said openly that it was his business as next of kin to look after the property, it would have been more favourably interpreted.

The rest of his evidence was elicited with visible reluctance, by a somewhat severe cross-examination. He related with considerable animus the circumstances when Mr. Tremlett struck him, so much so, that the eyes of Mr. — twinkled, and he managed, without much difficulty, to make the feeling more apparent. Keen as Mainwaring was, he had not, I fancy, been used to an English legal atmosphere; and he made such

futile efforts to show that he was a purely disinterested man—that it was for the sake of Mrs. Tremlett, and not for his own, that he commenced a task repugnant to him—that he defeated his own end.

After a somewhat rambling series of questions, Mr. —— suddenly demanded whether he remembered having a conversation with Dr. Brandling, in which he had remarked that the child of Mr. Tremlett had never seemed likely to live; and that owing to his father's infirmities, its death could not be regretted so much as if it had been a more healthy child.

Mainwaring fell into the trap, remarking that he recollects it perfectly; but also said that he had expressed regret for it, and had placed a crape band on his hat.

“I have nothing further to *ask* this witness,” said Mr. ——, looking thoroughly satisfied as he resumed his seat; and Mainwaring withdrew, not without a certain unpleasant consciousness that he had somehow or other committed himself. He had not been asked about his conver-

sation with me, and I did not feel called on to relate it. Whatever his motives were—and I did not suppose them to be purely benevolent—it did not alter the fact of Mr. Tremlett's insanity. George Carnegie seemed less uneasy, I thought, after this. Mr. Tremlett had leaned back the whole time with an affected nonchalance ; but casting not a few unfriendly glances towards his cousin from time to time.

The last witness of any importance was Dr. Brandling ; and when I say that nearly all the misfortunes which Mr. O'Ferrall had prognosticated actually befel him, I speak within the mark. He got on well enough in his examination, for he was treated judiciously, and by no means hurried. He gave evidence as to Mr. Tremlett's generally defective health, his perverseness, irritability, fault-finding, cruelty to animals, strong and unreasonable dislikes, and threatening language ; and swore in a positive and satisfactory manner, that he considered and treated him as insane.

Then Mr. —— rose to cross-examine, and the

torture began. He saw clearly enough that Brandling was a morally timid man, wanting in self-reliance, morbidly conscientious, keenly alive to disapprobation, or even to the appearance of blame, and that he was obstinate only when frightened.

The questions were put so rapidly, that Brandling had no time to modify or explain, without an exercise of greater valour than he possessed. The inferences left by the skilful counsel were, I need hardly say, unfavourable to the medical testimony, until many present began to look on Tremlett as an exceedingly ill-used man.

Dr. Brandling admitted that he had discharged eleven attendants within two years at Mr. Tremlett's request; that was perhaps treating him as a sane man: it was believing him rather than the attendants. He thought it not unnatural for a man wrongly confined to be noisy or to complain; he thought under such circumstances he himself should have complained, but in a different manner; that might be owing, perhaps, to his being a different sort of man. Though he changed

the attendants he did not set Mr. Tremlett at liberty, because he considered him insane.

He was not asked about his direct interest in the alleged lunatic, further than the sum he received annually for him, which, though considerable, was not disproportionate, and was also, I knew, a matter of no moment to Brandling, who had ample private means.

He remembered the conversation with Mr. Mainwaring immediately after the death of the child. Mainwaring appeared sorry for it. It was not until three weeks afterwards he received notice that the present inquiry was originated. (I may observe that shortly after this Mainwaring quietly disappeared, and was no more seen in court.) He would not swear that any of Mr. Tremlett's peculiarities were not compatible with sanity.

Here they went over the list of them together, and Brandling omitted to state that the existence of *all* of them in one individual gave another aspect to the matter. He admitted he had known men as cruel as Mr. Tremlett, or as irritable;

he knew men whose word could not be depended on when they were stating a case for themselves ; and he knew others who were in defective health ; none of these men were insane, had never been so, and were not considered likely to become so, that he knew of.

Mr. —— then asked whether any *two* of these peculiarities constituted insanity, as, for instance, cruelty and bad health. Dr. Brandling, as might be expected, would not swear that they did. Did cruelty and irritability ? No ! nor any three ? nor any combination as to quantity ? Could Dr. Brandling draw the line ? Would a little cruelty and much irritability be sufficient, or a moderate amount of fault-finding, coupled with great perverseness and bad health, or threatening language alone ? No ! Dr. Brandling could not say anything positive to all this ; and for a mild-tempered man was growing about as irritated as any lunatic might be.

“ He remembered Mr. Tremlett saying that if he killed any one he should not be hanged for it, while he, Dr. Brandling, would. That was pro-

bably true. He thought it proved Mr. Tremlett to be a dangerous lunatic. It was true two of the attendants had said the same thing, as far as respected Mr. Tremlett. It was not, therefore, necessarily an insane remark; sane and insane men might make the same observation; but in the first case it would not show insanity, in the second it would." When poor Brandling had arrived at this climax, I felt that the cause was lost. Mr. Tremlett appeared to enjoy all this amazingly.

Dr. Brandling continued: "He thought madmen irresponsible, because they did not know right from wrong. Mr. Tremlett did know that punishment followed crime, and that murder was considered crime; he, nevertheless, believed Mr. Tremlett to be insane." *

* Some of our judges hold that a true madman is necessarily unable to distinguish between right and wrong. I need hardly say that this is a mistake, into which no one who had practical experience with lunatics would fall.

Lord Brougham says, that "distinguishing right from wrong means a knowledge that the act the person was about to commit was punishable by law."—*Vide* Speech in the House of Lords. The

Mr. —— did not appear to think further cross-examination could amend these admissions, and intimated that he had no more questions to ask, and did not propose calling any witnesses on his side: he thought that, considering the nature of the testimony before them, such a proceeding would be unnecessary. So Dr. Brandling retired from the witness-box.

I supposed, in ignorance of legal forms, that our counsel would make a speech in our behalf; and I hoped that he would show how, if Brandling had been permitted to answer at length, the sense of his words would have been totally altered. I felt that I could have almost spoken

The Attorney-General on the trial of Bellingham said: “Although a man may be incapable of managing his own affairs, he may still be answerable for his criminal acts if he possesses a mind capable of distinguishing between right and wrong.”

Now in nearly five cases out of ten in lunacy, it is rather the insane impulse than the shattered intellect with which we have to deal, especially in the earlier stages.

Dr. F. Winslow lays down an excellent dictum, that the true test of irresponsibility should be, not whether the accused party was aware of the criminality of his actions, but whether *he has lost all power of control over his actions.*—Vide *Journal of Psychological Medicine.* No. xxvii. 1854.

myself if I had been allowed to do so. And the most convincing reasoning, the most subtle rejoinders, came into my head, until I longed to deliver myself of them. But it appeared that our part was over; and I understood that, as the other side called no evidence, our counsel was condemned to silence.

George Carnegie had again assumed a sombre and thoughtful air.

Amid a profound silence, Mr. —— rose to make his speech. He commenced by saying, that never in the whole course of his life had he seen a case so miserably break down; he did not wish to prejudge the matter, what he affirmed would, he thought, be amply sustained after an attentive consideration of the evidence. He would just briefly state what the question was before the jury.

The petitioner ought to prove not only that Mr. Tremlett was of unsound mind, but that he was incapable of managing his property, that his liberty was dangerous to himself and others. Not only that his thoughts, words, and actions

were such as a madman might use; but that they were of a sort which no sane man would display. Then let them examine what the much vaunted proof amounted to, and the enormous gap which remained between what ought to be proved—and doubtless would have been, were it possible to do it—and that which had really been accomplished to the satisfaction of the jury.

In the first instance it was endeavoured, by bringing a medical gentleman to state that Mrs. Tremlett, senior, was for many years afflicted with insanity, to prejudge the question and lead people to infer that her son must of necessity inherit the same disease. Why, good God! if this were the case, which of them present would be safe? Very few of them could assert they had no relations, remote or near, who had ever been subject to restraint. Let them, therefore, never listen for a moment to the necessity of hereditary madness.

He would review in order the evidence, first, of the servant of Mr. Tremlett, as to when the alleged attack originally took place; then that of

the physician who took charge of him; then the testimony of Dr. Brandling; lastly, he would sum up what was to be said in behalf of Mr. Tremlett; and he anticipated that his case would be found full, complete, and satisfactory, since it was not for the defence to prove that Mr. Tremlett was sane, but for the petitioner to place beyond doubt that he was insane. It must distinctly be borne in mind, that not only must he be of unsound mind, but he must be incompetent and dangerous—dangerous to himself or to others—before his liberty, the most precious boon of an Englishman, could be wrested from him. Neither was it enough to give evidence that a man was suffering under delusions. Many men were so, who nevertheless discharged admirably the every-day duties of life. A man might believe that he was a king, or a tea-kettle; or that he was made of glass, or of salt; or that he was the Great Mogul; but if such belief did not interfere with his performing his ordinary obligations to society, he was not therefore to be incarcerated as a lunatic. He believed that instances of the

kind had been by no means rare ; yet these men had retained the liberty which God had given them. Nay, he would say, that if every one who laboured under delusions were to be imprisoned in an asylum so-called, thousands of additional ones would have to be built, and even then all who might be said to require it would not be able to find a place therein.

But the delusion under which it was alleged Mr. Tremlett laboured was one so slight, so utterly insignificant, that he was astonished at its being named as such ; the evidence which was to sustain the fact amounted to the merest supposition.

He would examine the testimony upon which the first attack rested. The valet had sworn that the conduct of his master was odd, eccentric —so might many another valet, with as much reason ; that his master carried pistols about him —*that* was not a proof of insanity, but rather the reverse, considering the lonely places in which Mr. Tremlett was accustomed to walk ; that his master was often going out at night,

but he did not assert that his master *only* went out at night, and refused to do so in the daytime. If it had been so, it would hardly have amounted to madness; but there was no attempt made to affirm it. The servant never stated that he was in fear of his life from his master, nor that his mistress complained of being so. Admitting at its utmost value the testimony of Dr. ——, what did it amount to? Simply this: that Mr. Tremlett was at that period labouring under some temporary excitement, which with quiet, and under medical treatment, quickly disappeared. (Here a remark of dissent was made from the other side.)

Mr. —— resumed. He would *repeat* it, the excitement had disappeared; he would not say that his judgment was perfectly balanced during that excitement; but let them not forget that few gentlemen were perfectly sound in their judgment when submitted to the test of other men's opinions.

Whatever the recorded verdict of Dr. —— might be, as far as words went, his actions proved

that he really believed in Mr. Tremlett's restoration, since he consented to place him under Dr. Brandling's care more as an invalid than a lunatic. (Counsel opposite here again made a gesture of dissent.) He thought the evidence justified him in saying that, for, during the whole time of Mr. Tremlett's incarceration with Dr. —— (five months in all), he does not appear, excepting perhaps for the first few days, to have conducted himself otherwise than as a sane man.

As far as destroying birds went, that was a small cause for which to deprive a man of his liberty. Between a partiality for killing sparrows and a penchant for butchering pheasants he (the counsel) for one could discern no great difference.

His bodily health might not be free from defect. Which of them, having attained the age of forty, could hope to be otherwise? (Counsel opposite again made an observation.) Mr. Tremlett was not so old as that; but men grew old faster than they did fifty years ago.

As for his calling out at night, that fact was quite compatible with the conduct of a sane man who believed himself to be wrongfully imprisoned. Moreover, Dr. —— had himself admitted that it was not with the voice of a maniac that those screams were made; let them remember that admission, and place it to its proper account. As to Dr. Brandling's evidence, had he (Mr. ——) been on the opposite side with *that* to rely on as a sheet anchor, he should indeed have despaired. Dr. Brandling confessed that he had little or no experience in lunacy, that he had discharged eleven attendants because he so far believed the pretended madman as to prefer his testimony to that of others; that a man might have any of the notions that it was represented Mr. Tremlett entertained, and not be insane. Dr. Brandling refused to swear to Mr. Tremlett's insanity at all, or that he himself did not entertain erroneous notions; he was unable to swear where the line was to be drawn, or whether one or two mistaken ideas, or five or six, constituted lunacy. He could not say whether the ill-feeling

attributed to Mr. Tremlett towards his father was, or was not, ill-founded; since there might be causes arising between father and son, of which strangers must remain in perfect ignorance. Still less could he affirm that such a statement, if it ever existed, was other than perfectly harmless now, since Mr. Tremlett, senior, had been dead for many months. Which of the gentlemen of the jury would declare himself absolutely free from all unreasonable dislikes?

Before he proceeded to comment on the extraordinary nature of the misstatements of one witness (Mr. Mainwaring), he would, with the indulgence of the court, beg that Mr. Tremlett might be permitted to explain how far, or in what sense, he had ever entertained the delusions of which he was accused; he asked this at Mr. Tremlett's own request.

There was a slight sensation in the court when the desired permission was accorded, and Mr. Tremlett rose and bowed to the court. He then began to repeat a few sentences,

which, according to *my* impression, he had been engaged in writing down and committing to memory.

He said that he was not prepared to assert that he was wrongfully detained in the first instance; he was at the time so ill that it was all blotted from his memory, and he confessed that all was for the best, perhaps. As to his feeling towards his father, he would like to be excused from entering into that question; there were things between father and son sacred from the world, or even from medical men; but it was all over and gone.

He repeated these words in a jerking way, but without hesitation; and if the poor fellow could have stopped here, it would have been better for him; but he proceeded with rather more excitement of manner. No one but himself could judge to what he had been subjected; and unless everything was known, it was not possible to decide fairly: but as it was now a thing of the past, why should he not be set at liberty? what were the motives of those who

wished to keep him under restraint?—Here he stopped abruptly, and sat down.

As he met my eye, probably he remembered discussions with me, to which he felt he could not trust himself to allude at that instant; but when his glance turned from me on to Carnegie, there was a fleeting expression of such settled cunning and triumph, that not only George, but many others, noticed it. There was a dead silence. And if the verdict had been taken then, I am satisfied it would have been unfavourable to Mr. Tremlett's wishes.

I felt that the other side had lost, nor was I alone in my belief; and when the court immediately afterwards adjourned for refreshment, I had no doubt of the issue. Mr. Tremlett had sealed his own fate.*

* It is commonly supposed that no lunatic entertaining a delusion has volition sufficient to enable him to deny his belief in it; even for any important and tangible gain, however much he may avoid or equivocate. Dr. Bucknill, in the *Journal of Mental Science*, No. 20, 1857, mentions a case of a gentleman who completely concealed, and even denied, his delusions in conversation, but betrayed them in his letters. I have not, however, in my experience met with any similar instance. I

make no question that had I been permitted to converse with Mr. Tremlett in the presence of the court, I could have succeeded in showing from his own mouth, that the danger of his revengeful state of mind was not affected by the fact of his father's death. His enmity was merely transferred without diminution of force from the dead to the living. I had long entertained the conviction that Mr. Tremlett viewed all those who had been concerned in his detention as conspirators worthy of punishment; and from the vague and mysterious terms in which he alluded to his wife, I suspected that this poor lady was the chief object of his stifled resentment.

CHAPTER XII.

GEORGE CARNEGIE PLEADS AGAINST HIMSELF.

GEORGE CARNEGIE, whose face since Tremlett's address had worn a most sombre and troubled expression, disappeared instantly, and I did not see him again until the court had reassembled.

Mr. ——, the leader, was not present; and it was amid a breathless silence that Carnegie rose, and said that, owing to the sudden indisposition of his senior counsel, it devolved on him to conclude the defence, and in this unexpected position he must throw himself on the indulgence of the court.

He was exceedingly pale, but his manner was calm and resolute; and if no one else knew, I did, that it was not the suddenness but the nature of the duty, that stole the blood from his face.

Who can tell what were the various thoughts

that struggled in the breast of the young advocate as he stood there to make his first great essay? I think he would have gladly surrendered the long wished-for opportunity for distinction, could he have done it without incurring dishonour.

The tide of old memories swept over him with heavy, unresisted swell. His feelings now were those of baffled love and perished hopes;—though there had been a time when he would gladly have sacrificed, on the altar of love, his time, his means, his energies—all that is usually considered the inalienable wealth of youth, and that makes the earth fair to the sons of men. He had but to be silent, to refrain from active aid, and his old rival—the man who had dashed the cup of happiness from his lips years ago—would be officially pronounced a lunatic, and withdrawn, perhaps for ever, from society. How easily he might have reconciled this line of action with his conscience, after the unequivocal indications of sinister and revengeful design which Mr. Tremlett had betrayed!

If any such unworthy desire had slumbered

in his heart, it must have been roused to assert itself, for revenge is commonly stronger than ambition. He perhaps had known that pang, and endured that struggle, in the first instance; but in his present position the contest was even more complicated.

He might have refused the brief at first; but whatever alteration his opinions had undergone since, he had hardly the right to show it. If by any lack of earnestness he lost his cause, with what face could he support the reproaches of the woman who had selected him for her confidence? On the other hand, how could he resolve to deliver one whom he in vain essayed to believe he had forgotten into the power of a malignant madman?

In this internal strife he chose, as most men of just intentions but hot impulse would have done, to suppress his own feelings, and to act and speak as the paid advocate only.

Where doubt is felt, there is a certain satisfaction experienced by a sensitive conscience when the path decided on is also the most distasteful.

As he began to speak, all who noticed his frightful pallor set it down to the trepidation natural when an unexpected trial of skill is forced on a man not fully prepared; and I was, perhaps, the only spectator present who guessed the truth.

He did not touch that part of the defence which had already been ably disposed of by Mr. ——; but commenced by dissecting the nature and value of Mr. Mainwaring's evidence, anxious, as it appeared to me, rather to pull down his opponent's case than to substantiate his own.

He first pointed out that Mr. Mainwaring was a deeply interested party, since, as the child had died after the father had been placed under restraint, it was very improbable that any legal testament could have been executed to dispose of the unentailed property. In case of Mr. Tremlett's death before he regained his liberty, Mr. Mainwaring would necessarily inherit, as heir-at-law. No need, therefore, to ask why this gentleman was so anxious to prevent his relative from exercising his rights as a free citizen and a man of sound mind.

Having impugned his motive thus, Carnegie proceeded to arraign his truthfulness, and placed before the jury, in support of this charge, the two opposite statements to which that gentleman had distinctly sworn, namely, that he had commenced this proceeding without knowledge of the child's death, and in opposition to this, that he had conversed with Dr. Brandling, and professed sorrow respecting the boy's death, within three days of that event, according to Dr. Brandling's testimony ; and yet none of these proceedings were named until some weeks from that time.

Carnegie dwelt on this point with an indignant severity, which all present felt to be fully called for ; and once more, and very visibly, the jury veered round. In their first natural feeling of disgust at this exposure of the apparent motive of Mr. Mainwaring's aim, they lost sight, in my opinion, of the object for which they were called together ; in their determination to protect the alleged lunatic from a designing relative, they forgot that others were concerned ;

and that if Mr. Tremlett were really insane, it was required not only that society should be considered, but that the patient should be protected against himself and the consequences of his own misdeeds.

The more it became evident that the jury was with him, and the more profound the attention of the court, the more sombre and contracted grew Carnegie's face, and the more stern and bitter his tone, until his voice rang in my ears with a sharp, ill-omened sound, as though I listened to a man who was rather denouncing an offender than simply pleading for justice.

When he wound up with a brilliant and forcible appeal to the feelings of the twelve men in whose hands Tremlett's fate was placed, neither I, nor any one else in court, had a doubt as to which way the verdict would go.

After a very short absence they returned to record their decision—"That Mr. Tremlett was of sound mind, and capable of managing his own affairs."

There was a slight applause, followed by a

confused sensation, which proved a momentary reaction of opinion. The fact was that the spectators were very glad that Mainwaring was defeated, but they were not quite so glad that Mr. Tremlett was to be set at large.

The trial over, the spectators dispersed, not without recording pretty loudly their opinions of the various parties concerned.

Late that night George Carnegie strode into my rooms and flung himself into a chair. I was beginning to frame a sentence to the successful advocate conformable to my disturbed state of mind, but before I could utter the words which rose to my lips he commenced:

“Don’t blame me, Paul, I know all you have to say, and I suffer enough, God knows, by my day’s work, and by the thought of what that day’s work may yet bring forth.”

“My dear George, I have no right to blame you; perhaps Mr. —— was harder on me than I deserved; but you did your duty, I suppose, and I did mine.”

“My duty as a retained advocate? yes. My

duty as a man? no; that perhaps lay in a different direction. It may be that it would have been a better deed to have thrown up that accursed brief in the face of the whole court, and avowed that I felt and knew that Lawrence Tremlett was a subtle and dangerous madman. I was twenty times on the point of doing so, even as I spoke, and now I wish to God I had. I ought never to have undertaken the case, but I am neither more nor less than man; I wish I were," he continued, more hurriedly; "and she begged, and entreated, and wept, till—till I had no choice left. I think I should have pleaded for the emancipation of Satan on earth had she wished me to do so, and I thought she was sincere. I suspected myself; I was afraid that my instinctive repugnance was due to those bitter memories which in vain I have tried to forget. Ah, my love, my heart's darling," he exclaimed, with irrepressible emotion, "to what fate are you condemned? to whom have I delivered you up? to a cunning, vindictive, irresponsible lunatic."

I was strangely moved, and not a little surprised. I had fancied he was cured. Six years, and still the thought of Marion St. Maur had power over him like this !

“ Nay, George,” I interposed, “ you are surely taking the darkest view of the case. He may not be so bad as he was when I knew him, and furthermore his wife is not obliged to reside with him—certainly not without efficient protection.”

“ Don’t try to deceive me,” he said, roughly. “ Don’t prophesy smooth things. You forget that he is as free as you or I at this moment, and can compel his wife to live with him when he pleases. I read all that he meant in his eye. Blind fool that I was not to have translated at its proper value that devilish glance. Through pride and obstinacy I have sacrificed the woman for whom I would at any time these ten years have gladly laid down my life.” There was a pause; and he turned away and paced up and down the room. He stopped short, and said to me fiercely enough: “ Besides, if you think he may not be so very dangerous, what have you

been swearing to-day? Your phrase about her not living with him is of no value, for I knew then, and know now full well, that she meant to do so, even if her life is to pay the forfeit of her infatuated immolation."

"Are you quite sure of that, George?"

"Quite sure," he said; "she told me, after I had promised to defend her husband, that if I freed him she would never leave him again, and that if I lost my cause she would see my face no more."

Was this some subtlety of penance, I wondered to myself, devised by her woman's heart for that involuntary infidelity of the mind, of which none but herself was cognisant? for any one more irreproachable in her conduct since her marriage it would have been difficult to find, even in the world's estimation.

"Poor Marion!" George continued, in a melancholy strain; "she talked of going to the far regions of the world, where none could track her. She could hardly have hidden herself from me, I think, if I had been minded to trace her flight. Up to the moment of Tremlett's making

his absurd speech, I had hoped, in spite of your ill-got up case, that I was on the right side ; but when he looked at me, I was undeceived. I can't forget the expression of his eye ; it had been hidden, carefully kept under, and was evanescent ; but it betrayed volumes to my mind ; and to think that Marion will persist in placing herself entirely at his mercy. You doctors pretend to know everything ; can you tell me the secret of this marvellous instinct—this spaniel-like fidelity to such a man as Tremlett ?”

I made no answer to this—indeed, I had none to make. I was in my heart not a little annoyed at his reiterated assertions as to the quality of the evidence, and the ability of the managers on our side ; and I was industriously reassuring myself as far as possible with the reflection that I had done my best, and spoken according to truth, that juries were proverbially stupid, &c. ; so instead of replying I asked a question in my turn :

“ Where are Tremlett and his wife going ? Do you know their plans ?”

“ No, nor any one else, I think. All I can

tell you is that he had a will ready prepared, and that as soon as the trial had terminated he insisted on my witnessing it. He made this request personally, observing that as I was one of the few who did him the honour to believe him sane, it was fitting I should subscribe my testimony to the fact. 'I, Lawrence Tremlett, being in sound mind,' &c., and he laughed immensely as he read over the preamble; but it was not a pleasant laugh to her, in my opinion, Paul; and then he said he and his wife were going away for change of scene, and the enjoyment of their new liberty: and Mrs. Tremlett laughed too, and looked, I solemnly declare, as happy, and as bright and sunny as in the days I first knew her. O woman! who was it named you *le mensonge incarné?*"

"There, George, that will do; don't talk bad philosophy."

"You've heard all I know," he said, abruptly.
"Good-night, Paul."

"Good-night, George—fare you well!" and for many months we heard no more of Lawrence Tremlett and his wife.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SECRET BETRAYED IN DEATH.

“Inter delicias semper aliquid sævi nos strangulat. For a pint of honey thou shalt here likely find a gallon of gall, for a dram of pleasure a pound of pain, for an inch of mirth an ell of moan; as ivy doth an oak, these miseries encompass our life.”—BURTON.

It was assize-time in a certain town in the north-west of England. This business was then an affair of much greater pomp and importance than it is suffered to be in these days, when most of the inns are closed for lack of custom, and the grass grows in the streets.

The principal hotel at that time, known as King George's Arms, was always well frequented, but on this particular day it was full to overflowing. There was, however, something unusual about the aspect of those who hurried in and out, as though some unexpected or singular

news had suddenly been made known. The landlord appeared in an agitated and perturbed frame of mind, and issued numerous and somewhat contradictory orders. The waiters wore an air of solemn mystery, and glided rapidly about in a stealthy, troubled manner. Men stood apart in groups of two or three, conversing earnestly in an under-tone.

Two gentlemen, who seemed less impressed than the rest of those about, were seated at breakfast in the coffee-room, when a third entered, and after ordering coffee, pen and ink, was accosted by them. “How are you, Carnegie? Long time since I have seen you.”

Carnegie returned their salutation, and joined their party. He had altered a little, but it was for the better: he had not attained to that leathery, cadaverous hue, which is the appointed possession of a hard-working barrister; and there was still a merry laugh playing about his eye; but his step and actions were much more measured and deliberate, and his manner appeared more studiously calm.

“ Well ! what do you make out of this wonderful affair ? ” said the first speaker.

“ What affair ? ”

The other made a significant gesture with his hand, intimating that he alluded to something which had happened in another portion of the house.

“ A woman has murdered her husband, and cut her own throat, or strangled herself, I’m not quite sure which, in one of the rooms above us.”

“ I cannot make it out,” replied the second. “ Every one has a different version ; however, something or other awkward has occurred ; but my impression is, that the man cannot be dead, for I hear they have taken depositions.”

“ My clerk swore he had seen at least one of the bodies. What business have people to make spectacles of themselves in a respectable place, and disarrange every one ? ” grumbled the first.

“ I was told that a man had killed his wife,” said Carnegie ; “ but as it did not concern me,

I did not inquire further; but now you remind me, I saw a *posse* in black proceeding upstairs, representing, I suppose, the law, the church, and perhaps the doctor," and he proceeded to seal his letter with much deliberation.

"Waiter!"

"Yessir."

"What's the name of the man who has killed his wife, upstairs?"

"He's quite a gentleman, sir. Mr. Tremlett, of —— Hall."

"Hey, Carnegie!" exclaimed one of the gentlemen. "Your old client, I'll bet you twenty pounds!" and then stopped short, astounded at the expression of the livid countenance which met his eye.

Carnegie sat as if spellbound for a minute, the room swam round him, and faint noises buzzed in his ears; then by great effort he rose and strode out of the room, and they heard his footstep ascending the stairs.

The two gentlemen looked at each other.

"Queer fellow Carnegie is," said the first;

“I should think he’s sorry now he got that unprepossessing madman set at liberty.”

“Pooh!” returned the other; “that trial made his fortune. He has had as many briefs as his hands could hold ever since.”

On the top of the stairs Carnegie encountered three persons slowly filing on tiptoe out of a small door to the left. One was a beetle-browed, athletic, sharp-looking police officer; a calm, keen, kindly-faced gentleman in black, and a tall, grey-haired clergyman, whose dress proclaimed his profession, followed.

“Is—is Mrs. Tremlett—is she dead?” asked Carnegie, in a dry, husky voice.

“No, sir,” replied the doctor, drawing on his gloves. “She is not dead; not materially injured, I think; but, poor lady, she has had a narrow escape!” and he laid his finger significantly on his throat.

“As I understand, her husband was seized before he effected his purpose,” said the clergyman, who was also a magistrate.

“Fortunately,” was the answer; “otherwise

his wife would not now be alive ; there are the purple marks of his hand on each side of her neck."

"I hope the murderer is in custody," said Carnegie, almost fiercely ; "he ought not to be at liberty for another instant ; where is he ?"

"Stop, sir," interposed the clergyman, authoritatively, laying a hand on his shoulder ; "he has passed away beyond our reproaches, and the vengeance of man has no power over him. God has judged him."

He opened the door, and Carnegie followed him into the chamber. The coarse yellow blind was drawn down, but the morning sun shed an oppressive glare into the room, and there, on a little white bed, quite dead, lay poor Lawrence Tremlett ; the face was very pale, and the limbs were fast becoming rigid.

George had often looked on death before, but he told me afterwards that he never yet had seen so strange a difference between the living and the dead. The troubled fierceness, the dark suspi-

cions, the unrest and misery which had once characterized poor Tremlett; had for ever passed away, and only the sinlessness, and trust, and calm of a sleeping child seemed stamped on his face.*

An inquest was held, and a verdict returned of "died by the visitation of God." It was supposed that Mr. Tremlett had in a sudden frenzy attempted the life of his wife, and that he died in a fit before he could accomplish his intention.†

He was dead, and she was unconscious when they were found, and her state precluded any examination respecting the occurrence. The magistrates humanely spared her a useless trial,

* I have repeatedly noticed myself the tendency in the features to assume, after death, the expression of early days and more peaceful times—and most medical men have made the same remark. It seems as if the destruction of all mortal passions lent for a moment the unstained innocence of childhood. In other cases very remarkable resemblances to relatives have appeared for the first time which had never been discovered during life.

† An examination went to prove that extensive disease of the brain had long existed, quite sufficient to account for the excitement, and the fatal result.

and so, after some weeks of excitement, the sad business was forgotten. Those who inquired were told that the young widow had left England, perhaps to endeavour in more sunny lands, and beneath brighter skies, to forget, if that might ever be, the sufferings which had darkened her married life.

* * * * *

Beneath the village spire, in the dark vault of his sires, lie the mortal remains of poor Lawrence Tremlett, and above him the monumental brasses proclaim his birth and parentage, and give the dates of the beginning and ending of his short career on earth. Many others of the same descent sleep around him, who, if the traditions of their family may be believed, suffered less and sinned more. But the hopes they have blasted, the hearths they have made desolate, the gold they have gambled away, and the manhood they have disgraced, these, which lay so lightly on them in life, may be a burden heavier to be borne elsewhere.

As a man's strength is, so shall it be required of him; and I have thought, as I have looked upon his grave, that at the last it may be found that perhaps the most tried, and not the most guilty of his race, was Lawrence Tremlett.

CHAPTER XIV.

POST TENEBRAS LUX.

SOME five years after these events had happened, I was enjoying, in a region not then as well known as in the present² day, that sort of hurried scamper which is dignified by the title of a physician's holiday.

I had wandered about the whole of one long afternoon ; the white snows above and beneath, glaciers and chasms and rents in the pale blue ice everywhere around. The solemn silence which filled the air was unbroken, save by the distant rush of an avalanche or the mellow music of the bells on the homeward-bound cattle ; and as I stood I forgot business and toil, and the daily sadness and sorrow which surrounded me when I was in old England.

The light faded rapidly from the heavens, the

stars appeared, and the moon streamed forth until the slumbering giant of mountains, from being almost invisible, loomed out ahead like a fairy palace in the skies, with its vast halls illuminated as if for a *fête*.

Standing some dozen yards from me, half in shadow, were a man and a woman holding converse, of which I could only distinguish the words "dear wife." Unwilling to intrude on them, I made several feints as if to return; but finding them not inclined to precede me, I advanced to pass them. It was too dark to distinguish their faces, but a voice struck on my ears.

"George Carnegie!" "Paul, is that you?" were simultaneous exclamations.

"This is Mrs. Carnegie," said George, gaily.

I bowed, not much the wiser for this twilight explanation, and followed them into a well-lighted room, where I was enlightened.

"Marion's happiness is in my care now," said George, looking as if he had never known a day's thought or an hour's pain, and I saw once more

that well-known face charmed back to its old gay, loving expression.

Sometimes it may be that our human joys are cut down to the very ground, but life slumbers in the roots beneath the earth ; and when the memory of the misery that has passed shall have faded away like the last year's snow, the flower shall bloom again once more.

END OF VOL. I.

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THE TRAGEDY OF LIFE.

THE SOMNAMBULIST.

“There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there ;
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair.”

“ELOPEMENT IN HIGH LIFE.—Great excitement has been caused in certain circles of the aristocracy, by the flight of a lady long distinguished for her eccentricities and beauty, with a well-known gallant captain. As the latter was, it is understood, already under a matrimonial engagement in another quarter, more than one disagreeable consequence is likely to result.”

How much misery is occasionally thus briefly

summed up in the paragraph of a newspaper! To explain how I was interested in the above, it will be necessary that I should acquaint my readers with a few preliminary details.

About three months previously I had met in town my old and highly esteemed friend General Faulkner. I had known his children from infancy, and he mentioned his daughter Sibyl with all a father's pride, adding, with a half sigh, the intelligence of her approaching marriage with a Captain Daracott.

“Not, doctor, that the connection is not all we could desire; but she is my only daughter, and so like what her mother was when I first saw her.”

His eyes grew very bright as he said this.

“Come, come!” I said, striving to ward off the regrets I saw stealing over him. “It is but the way of the world, and we old fellows must give in to it. Married as well as unmarried, she is still your daughter, and not one likely to make you forget it.”

The day after this conversation, I met General Faulkner and his daughter among the equestrians

in the Park. She had, as a child, given promise of unusual loveliness, and was now a very exquisite girl, with the chiselled features, lithe, slender limbs, and sunny golden-hued hair, which best fulfil the artistic ideal of the old Greek beauty. By her side rode a rather handsome man, and there was a marked *empressemement* in his manner, which sufficiently denoted the lover for me to imagine that he was no other than the Captain Daracott alluded to by the general. The happy girl kissed her hand to me with that sort of brilliant, rippling smile which is born of the fleeting heart-joy of love.

About three weeks from this time, having missed an appointment on business, I followed my friend to St. James' Theatre, where I knew my best chance lay of meeting with him. Rachel was playing that evening, and I was soon fascinated by her wonderful delineation of madness in *Adrienne Lecouvreur*. I felt all my professional enthusiasm enlisted when I saw the accuracy and faithfulness of her acting, and knew how it was verified by my own observation and

experience. So evident was it even to uninitiated eyes, that the whole audience thrilled as they listened to her words; and when this happens, we may take for granted that that which is then rehearsed has many times before been done, suffered, or endured, either in hospital, madhouse, or dungeon.

It has been said (I am not aware whether truthfully or no) that Mdlle. Rachel used to frequent the hospitals and prisons for the purpose of watching the dying, especially when these happened to be notorious profligates or great criminals; that while the passing bell tolled for *les agonisants* she would study them silently and attentively for hours, and then return home and enact the part with such terrible vividness that her attendants would stand panic-stricken. However this may be, the power she possessed of displaying the peculiar look of hallucination common to patients subject to spectral illusions* was

* Of spectral illusions there are differences to be noted in the *causes*, though not so much in their effects. One lunatic will spend hours haranguing imaginary individuals, or answering inaudible voices. Another will mistake you for an

not easily forgotten when once seen. It was a wonderful performance; and when this gifted woman died, unquestionably one of our greatest artistes passed away from us.

In one of the luxurious private boxes of this theatre sat a singularly beautiful woman. I used the word *sat*, but she rather lay couched among the dark crimson cushions. I have justly called her beauty singular, for it was of that order which dazzled, fascinated, and repelled, like that of a snake. Her attitude was one of profound and indolent nonchalance, but her large, glittering, cruel eyes darted everywhere: in truth she looked all eyes, like the fabled basilisk. There were standing near me a group of gentlemen, and the following remarks fell on my ear: —

“Who is that beautiful creature?” asked a dark-haired, impetuous-looking young fellow.

enemy and attack you violently. In the first case the sufferer has probably morbid sensations which produce spectral illusions, while in the other he has lost the power of distinguishing and attending to that which really surrounds him. In either case, comparison is lost, so that the two different causes produce nearly the same result.—*Vide CONOLLY.*

“ Which ? ” replied a caustic-looking man, about five-and-thirty, who had apparently lived *his* life pretty well. The *lorgnettes* were immediately put in requisition.

“ That ? ” in a tone of marked emphasis. “ Oh, that is ‘ *La Donna Mobile* : ’ at least, so she is called.”

“ Well, but who, or what is she ? ”

“ Why, it is Mrs. Haveril, not quite unknown to fame. Her husband, George Haveril, married her when she had lots of money, and he had nothing but his Derby-book ; and a very badly made up book it was too. They did not get on well together somehow, so he went to Russia, on a diplomatic mission ; and as he is very careful of his wife’s health, he left her in England, where she amuses herself *joliment*.”

“ She is a very lovely woman, however,” said the young man, emphatically.

“ Very, and an affectionate creature too,” returned the other, sarcastically, “ though her manners are cold and rather against her at times.”

“ Could you introduce me?”

“ I could, but I won’t have your innocent blood on my head, young Elton.”

“ I will procure an introduction if it is ever so difficult.”

“ It is not difficult at all: they say there is no game too high or too low for her, so that you would have an exceedingly good chance among the herd. Her talent for ruining young ones is immense.”

“ Is that Daracott with her?” demanded a third.

“ Yes, I think so, though he keeps rather in the background. I suppose the Faulkners are here.”

“ Well, they say every one knows his own business best; but if I were old Faulkner, I should think twice about Daracott before I let him walk off with my daughter.”

“ Oh, Daracott can take care of himself if ever a fellow could, even with Mrs. Haveril.”

“ My dear fellow, that remark shows your immense ignorance of the sex. No man is safe

where a woman is concerned. They are the natural enemies of men, and our life is one long struggle to get the better of them."

"Then you won't introduce me?" said the first speaker.

"No; I tell you once for all, Elton, you had better be dragged through any mire than in that woman's train."

A move followed, and I heard no more. I knew that it was all quite true. I did not live in the gay world to which these men belonged, but it hardly needed that to be aware of Mrs. Haveril's misdeeds. Already unhappiness, caused by her arts, had been brought under my notice professionally; and much more was to come. There are some men of whom it may unquestionably be said, that it were good for them that they had never been born; and keen observers of society will also be found who think of some women that, not only had it been good for themselves never to have been born, but good also for human beings in general.

Another remark I may also make: It is

generally understood that when a woman is wicked, her wickedness infinitely transcends that common to men; and it is on a like principle, that, though the more serious crimes are usually committed by the dark-haired, bilious type of temperament, the criminals who have attained to the greatest height of subtle and multiplied crimes have been fair-haired,—as, for instance, Cæsar Borgia and the Marchioness of Brinvilliers.

Some ten years before I had first beheld Mrs. Haveril; she then struck my imagination as personifying the *Lamia*, which Keats immortalized, and as she looked *then*, so she looked now. At the age of eighteen she was not young; she seemed not a day older at twenty-eight. She was very beautiful, a little frail and a little faded, when she first appeared, at nineteen, as the somewhat ill-used wife of a notorious *roué*; years afterwards, her beauty was still undimmed, and her health matchless. With nerves of that steely *finesse* which are often the most terrible weapons of a shameless

woman, she had too little heart and too perfect a physical organization ever to be ill-humoured. I suppose she never knew what shame, remorse, grief, or illness was. She had all the beauty, sagacity, cruelty, and verve of a demon; and was always to me a physiological and psychological marvel.

It so happened that I saw her again that evening, for, as I stood talking to the Faulkners in the crush-room, she entered, leaning on the arm of Captain Daracott, and I had leisure to observe the latter more minutely. He was undoubtedly a handsome man, but that was in my opinion diminished by his large, heavy, brown eyes, which had in their formation one peculiarity common to the brute species: the coloured part of the ball was of unduly large proportions, and the white of the eye was nearly invisible, which gave him an animal and almost ferocious expression; while the dilating and mobile pupils betrayed the man who could dare much, but would "tremble as he dared."

On seeing the Faulkners he hesitated for an

instant, and then hastily resigned Mrs. Haveril to another gentleman, and advanced to Sibyl Faulkner. The married lady cast one calmly scrutinizing glance from beneath her drooping eyelids, and passed on; but I felt that very im-passibility of demeanour to be dangerous. The general seemed ill pleased. However, Daracott escorted them to the carriage, and so we parted.

Shortly after this, Daracott's attention to Mrs. Haveril became a matter of notoriety, and hints of his profligacy in other respects having reached the general's ears, some very painful scenes resulted, and a partial estrangement followed. Then, I believe, on Daracott's representation, he was again suffered to assume the character of a lover.

One night he had called on the Faulkners previous to escorting them to a ball, and had behaved in his usual manner; he left them only, he said, to rejoin them. But they saw no more of him, for within a couple of hours he set out with Mrs. Haveril for Italy; and the announcement

at the head of this narrative appeared in the evening papers.

The Honourable George Haveril was in Russia, and apparently cared little about his wife's proceedings. General Faulkner was an aged man, and his only son a mere boy; so that there was, in one sense, no one to resent all this, even had Captain Daracott been where he could have been found. I was at that time for some weeks unavoidably in the country; but I learnt from inquiries that Miss Faulkner had behaved with spirit and dignity,—that she had neither shunned nor sought society, nor betrayed by an altered demeanour what the inner struggle might be; and that on one occasion, when compelled by some indiscreet allusion, she had mentioned him with calm pity.

Before I was again in town the season was drawing to a close, and among the earliest to leave were the Faulkners, who returned to their romantic seat, Strathsay Castle, in the glen of —, which lay among the Scotch hills of —. Then there was a pause of some few weeks in

my intelligence respecting their welfare. Before two months had elapsed, I received the following letter in the well-known hand of the general :—

“ MY DEAR DOCTOR,

I AM seriously uneasy respecting the health of my dear child. Late events” (here the letter was blurred as though an old man’s tears had fallen on it) “have severely tried it. Could you manage a few days’ absence from your engagements? My carriage shall meet the up-train at —— station. It will be as well to say nothing of the object of your visit.

“ My dear doctor,

“ Believe me yours,

“ C. H. FAULKNER.”

It was a large, noble handwriting, but a little tremulous in some passages. I lost as little time as possible in carrying his wishes into effect, musing meantime on the concluding sentence of the letter.

How is it that in pestilence, fever, or any other scourge of the human race, the physician is sent

for without disguise, and the case at once committed to a professional hand? But in the dread and mysterious mental disease, where, in the first stage, time lost is far more precious than jewels; where medical treatment is valuable almost in proportion as it is early; where the most unreserved confidence to the medical man is dictated by prudence, and the utmost candour of friends and relatives is essential to his forming a correct diagnosis,—a fatal repugnance often exists to make the necessary statements, and a childish irresolution in submitting to the appropriate remedies. The name of the disease must not be mentioned, the visit must be disguised, the questions are to be secret! You may name almost any vice as inherent in a family with less risk of offence than the increasing plague and dread heirloom of insanity.

I always feel, in cases such as these, like a detective officer; and however much the relatives may flatter themselves that their motive is unknown, I never knew an instance where the patient failed instinctively to penetrate the true

object of my visit. Perhaps the suspicious temper, so often a premonitory symptom, assists their faculties in this respect. From the very absence in General Faulkner's letter of all mention of the nature of the malady which caused his solicitude, I felt sure that it was mental, and that he would not even state to himself to what his fears tended.

That night I ensconced myself in the train for the North, and at break of day awoke in York. We all know the uncomfortable, chilled, unwashed feeling of that waking. A cup of hot coffee was soon procured. Little news-boys went along the platform shouting, as usual, the names of their papers.

My *vis-à-vis*, a placid-looking youth, purchased a copy of *Don Juan*, and, leaning back, devoted himself diligently to its perusal. It is a book that young men affect, and women deny; and yet what more severe lesson could a man of twenty-three read than that tale of human passion, with its fast-fleeting ecstasy, its brief duration,—told by an experienced and unhappy voluptuary? How

impotent any one is to prolong its existence, to prevent sorrow from following it, or shame from mingling with it!

It was nearly two o'clock before I reached the little station indicated in my instructions, and then a long and somewhat dreary ride of upwards of three hours was still before me, through a tract of country thinly inhabited. Autumn was fast fading into winter, the green fern leaves were dyeing into orange-brown, the purple pink of the heather had withered into a faded yellow redolent of wild scenery, and its peculiar scent was wafted on the wind. We crossed a moor where a gibbet still remained to tell of past days, and the chains clanked with every gust. Then we descended into a valley, and for some miles our route ran along by the course of a mountain torrent. A ponderous mountain reared itself over the glen, composed of a multitude of broad steps laid in strata; its rough sides glistening with the waters which fell over them from above. Here and there glittered a mass of white crystallized

quartz, and behind that a deep narrow cleft in the mountain made a background of darkness. At length the night began to close in. We passed a long belt of dark fir-trees, and I was not sorry when a sudden turn revealed the welcome sight of the lighted windows of Strathsay Castle.

I was received by General Faulkner and his son Basil; the latter, I think, as noble-looking a lad as I ever beheld. His slight, tall, but sinewy, well-knit body, the spirited yet affectionate expression of the face, the fearless glance and almost girlish sweetness of his smile, made him such a stripling as his father might well look on with pride. Rugby, Eton, and Harrow, thank God! own many a hundred such as he; and I never see them without an inward prayer that their manhood's work may prove equal to their boyhood's promise.

Sibyl did not make her appearance until dinner was announced, when she welcomed me kindly, though in a wearied and abstracted manner. I was prepared, perhaps, for a greater change than was at first perceptible, though one difference I

noticed directly. She sat among us quiet and abstracted. She had forgotten all the wiles and caressing ways that used to make her so charming; they had failed her when she most needed their aid, and she had no heart for them now. Her eyes looked heavy with unshed tears, and the dark lines beneath them told of miserable thoughts and sleepless nights. She performed the duty of hostess mechanically and drearily. There was no alacrity in her movements or enjoyment in her actions, and there was evident a look of undefined pain, as though some vague yet distressing weight oppressed her.

A French author has said that a woman's life has three epochs: "La première est consacrée à comprendre; la seconde, à éprouver; la troisième, à regretter;" and the life of Sibyl seemed destined to be filled early and sadly by the last. The first shock was undoubtedly that to the affections, when the poor girl discovered how uselessly she had expended the best treasure a woman can give, and how powerless it was to retain all she most cared for; then came the second and more

deadly blow—the discovery of the worthlessness of the loved one; of the poorness and meanness of his character. A love that has always been one-sided and unrequited, can never suffer this full agony, and a love snatched from us by death sleeps apart from our every-day thoughts, invested with a halo of purity and holiness: it has passed away from the material world, and exists only in the “grand and shadowy realm of dreams,” and *that* sorrow is hardly felt as pain. But in a case like Sibyl’s, there is no consolation of the kind; it is one bitter, miserable mortification; and it is many a long day before the poor sufferer can say, along with indignant friends and relatives, “It is well we have been severed, and that so bad a nature stands detected.”

Almost as soon as dessert was placed on the table, Miss Faulkner left the room, and while we sat over our wine, the general began, evidently with considerable effort, to tell me the state of things which had caused him to summon me. Young Basil drank no wine, and once or twice rose as though to quit the room;

but, after hovering about in an irresolute manner, he returned to his chair. I could have wished he had left us, for in this painful recital there would, I knew, be much to sadden and irritate a young heart; and I dare say I expressed my wish in my manner, but there was no resisting the anxious pleading glance which I received in return, so the boy sat down with us again. The general proceeded to state that of which the reader is already in possession, concerning the disastrous termination of Sibyl's attachment to Captain Daracott—the apparent success with which she had struggled against her sorrow—and her demeanour up to the time she left town. But here, it would appear, began the visible failure of those efforts. When unkind eyes and criticizing tongues no longer surrounded her, and the false excitement of dissipation ceased to exist, then came the steady back-current of reaction. Like a noble horse pushed beyond its strength, whose spirit overtaxed its physical power, so had she in the end succumbed. First, lassitude and weariness

ness fell on her, and the struggles to appear cheerful had produced on her naturally highly sensitive frame a morbid exaltation of the nervous system.

“How, I cannot account,” he added, “but my daughter has become a confirmed sleep-walker.”

“How long is it since you have discovered this?”

“About six or eight weeks since.”

“And how often has it happened, and who discovered it?”

“Why, Basil was disturbed one night from his sleep by horrible screams. He left his room and proceeded, guided by the sound, towards the hall. Sibyl was there in only her night-dress, and her maid stood by her. The latter had heard a noise, missed her young mistress, and found her on the stairs. Then, being much frightened, she took hold of her, calling her by her name. On this Sibyl fell into such a paroxysm of terror, that she uttered loud cries. She appeared neither asleep nor

perfectly awake, though her eyes were open. After some time she grew calmer, and becoming aware of her situation, allowed herself to be conducted back to her sleeping-room. Three nights after, she wandered out about one in the morning on the lawn in front of these windows; and there, owing, perhaps, to the wet and cold of the grass on her naked feet, she awoke, and returned of her own accord. The next week we again found her proceeding downstairs in the middle of the night, and since then it has occurred three or four times every week, and on one occasion twice in the same night."*

* Somnambulism has been well defined as "dreaming carried to a pathological extent." Childhood and old age seem exempt from it, while a delicate nervous system and imaginative disposition predispose to it. It often occurs almost regularly, and then after a time some alteration in the pursuits and circumstances of the patient takes place, and the attacks cease as mysteriously as they began. At other times it precedes disease, chiefly of a nervous or paroxysmal character, and, in some rarer cases, has proved the harbinger of insanity. The general features of somnambulism are too well known to need a lengthy description. The eyes may be either shut or open, but the pupil does not contract or dilate with exposure to light, and ordinarily there is an entire absence of susceptibility to stimuli; and this anæsthesia, or loss of sensation, is in proportion to the intensity of the sleep and concentration of

“It seems to have increased, then, steadily from the commencement?”

“It has, indeed, doctor.”

“Did you observe whether, the day after her first attack, there was any nervous tremor in her manner, or lassitude in her appearance?”

“The last was very visible: but I don’t remember noticing the first; did you, Basil?”

“No, father,” returned the boy, sadly.

“I must see a little for myself, my dear general, before I can venture to judge. And now, Basil, I should recommend bed for you. You must not let your anxiety for this single symptom weigh on you too much. Remember,

the patient in the dream which he is acting. The senses of smell and taste appear dormant, or are sometimes altered, so that water is taken for wine, or *vice versâ*.—(*Vide Feuchtersleben.*) Sound is heard very imperfectly, or not at all; the speech is slow, but distinct. In less entire sleep, the speech is incoherent, or undistinguishable. I have known somnambulists enter perfectly into conversation with bystanders, and, in the next fit, they will remember what they did or said in the preceding one, though unable to do so in the waking state. Animals appear partially subject to somnambulism; and I think Buffon certifies that nightingales dream, and their visions have the complexion of their character, for they hum their airs with a low voice.

I see more of these things than you do. They are often merciful warnings of nature to attest that it is suffering, and must be tended and cared for. Go, my dear lad, to bed."

Basil left us; we lit our cigars, and the general, apparently relieved by my last words, turned the conversation on Captain Daracott, the worthless author of all this misery. He spoke of him with bitter scorn and indignation, and it evidently required the remembrance that he was a Christian gentleman, as well as a soldier, to keep his anger down.

"Up to the last, doctor, the scoundrel kept up appearances. Only the night before, he brought her a splendid bouquet of double violets, which she was actually wearing when the news was broken to her." (I remembered that I had noticed some violets on her table, but I made no remark.) He proceeded: "I seem to see her now as she turned white and faint, and then fell like a crushed flower to the earth."

After a little more conversation, General Faulkner retired for the night. I went up to

my own room for the purpose of fetching some papers that I wished to finish in the library. As I passed Sibyl's door I saw something dark outside, like a bundle of rugs. I bent down to examine it with my light. It was young Basil, wrapped in plaid and cloak, a silent sentry at his sister's door. He was sleeping soundly, poor boy. I wondered whether Sibyl knew of that dumb watchful tenderness. I remained in the library for two hours, and then proceeded by another staircase to my sleeping apartment, fearing to disturb Basil.

All the house seemed as silent as the grave. Just before I entered—indeed, as I had my hand on the handle of the door—a sound like a sigh seemed to pass by my ears. I listened attentively, and then heard distinctly that light rustling noise as of a woman's dress when she descends stairs. I turned the corner, and leant over the principal staircase, holding my candle well forward as I did so. I saw a figure, attired in white, gliding rapidly down: when I say gliding, I mean that she progressed

with extreme swiftness, and yet not in the measured manner of ordinary walking. I hurried instantly down the other way, so as to encounter her at the foot of the stairs. It was, as I expected, Sibyl Faulkner: her eyes closed, and her beautiful colourless features fixed in a sort of ghastly rigidity. In her hand she held firmly an *unlighted* candle. As she crossed the hall I walked by her side, and noticed then the excessive peculiarity of her movements. She never placed her heels on the ground, but rested exclusively on her toes; and her back was curved in a very singular manner. As she passed into the middle of the drawing-room I observed how dexterously she avoided the chairs and other obstacles in her way. Indeed, it is difficult to explain the unerring skill with which somnambulists, when their eyes are closed, or the sense of seeing evidently asleep, will still avoid striking against furniture, &c., unless we suppose with Reil and Humboldt, "that the nerves have a certain sensible atmosphere by which they feel beyond themselves."

She advanced to the table, lifted the violets out of the water, appeared to smell at them, and replaced them; she then put the candle on the table, opened her desk, pressed a secret spring, lifted up one of the leaves, and seemed to be searching for letters. The candle was at that moment so placed, that, had it been lighted, which it was not, the light could not have fallen on the inside of the desk. She took it up, and placed two books beneath it, so that it was rightly elevated for seeing. I held my candle close to her eyes, and gently raised the lids; the eyes were utterly without expression, the pupils dilated, and not contracting with the light. The lids remained open, and she looked like some beautiful cataleptic. She fumbled over the letters, and then closed the desk with a deep sigh.

While standing by her, watching her with the most profound interest, I caught a glimpse of a white, horror-stricken face in the doorway. It was Basil, with his cloak over his shoulder. I knew that if he startled her, the shock might

be irreparable; so I hastily signed to him to keep silence, and, repeating her own name in a low voice, I tried to lead her away. At first she appeared reluctant; but soon allowed herself to be led by the hand. Basil and I conducted her to her room; for the lad had the tenderness and gentleness of a woman with his sister. She placed herself in bed, heaving a deep sigh as she lay back, as though a pent-up heart sought thus to relieve itself. I fastened the windows with a contrivance of my own, locked the outer door, saw Basil safely into his room, and then went to my own bed, in a very thoughtful frame of mind.

The next morning Sibyl came down, tired and unrefreshed in appearance. We were unanimously silent on the subject of last night's incident. I persuaded her to ride with me, and I had then an opportunity of distinctly observing the shattered state of her nerves. Formerly an intrepid and graceful horsewoman, she now mounted with visible repugnance, and the slightest quickening of our pace seemed to

terrify her. In about a quarter of an hour she turned to me with an expression of real distress, and proposed walking by the side of her horse; but this I would not permit. She shed one or two tears at my apparent unkindness; but after a few efforts to engage her attention on other subjects, I fortunately succeeded. She forgot, or appeared to forget, her fears, and before we returned, her spirits were excessively high.

As we rode into the avenue, she said, "Then you do not think I have really lost my nerve, doctor? You think I shall ride as well as ever, do you not?"

"I do, indeed, Sibyl. You have been a good deal shaken; and, as with all delicately organized persons, it tells on your nerves first."

"I am very glad to hear you say so, doctor; for it grieved papa so, the last time I rode with him; I could hardly keep from crying the whole way, I was so frightened. It mortified me sadly. I only wonder dear papa was not angry; he is a soldier, you know, and cannot

bear anything like cowardice — even in a woman."

That evening I joined Miss Faulkner early in the drawing-room; there was a vase on her little table containing another fresh bunch of hothouse violets—I wondered who had renewed them; and by these was placed a vacant chair. I sat down, and while we talked, watched her closely.

She gave me the idea of being in a state of expectation; and I had an undefinable idea that there was some thought connected with this chair. On some pretence I took possession of it, and observed immediately that she was annoyed by it. She rose abruptly, went to the window, and looked out earnestly into the darkness; then returned, but seemed unable to sit still. After a few minutes, not without a little effort, she requested me to leave that seat, and take the one opposite to her. I did so, of course: she then placed the door open, and sat down again; the conversation dragged on in fragments, then languished altogether. She dozed, or appeared to doze, and seemed ex-

cessively lethargic. Once or twice I thought she had dropped off to sleep. After about twenty minutes she rose; but this time her eyes were wide open, and with a strange stony stare. In crossing the room the same peculiar gait was visible that I had noticed the night before. She went to the door, and said twice, distinctly, "Edward, Edward," in a tone of earnest entreaty; then, after apparently listening intently, she sighed profoundly and returned to her chair by the fire: a little shiver convulsed her for a moment, her eyes gradually closed, and she seemed to repose again.

I was much troubled by all this, knowing well how terribly the nervous system must be affected before such a train of symptoms could be exhibited. I thought if Captain Edward Daracott could see this lovely stricken girl, he would rue his cruel handiwork.

I made a point of conversing with the general that night on this distressing subject, and told him honestly how much I disliked the present state of things; especially this continued

sleep-walking. I mentioned the scene in the drawing-room. He was very uneasy, though he tried to appear calm.

“ My poor child ! What do you advise, doctor ? ”

“ Change of scene : she must leave home and friends for a time, general, and all that can remind her of her grief. You must administer the tonic of separation and novelty. Her past is pain ; her present is overshadowed by its misery ; her future is to her mind without hope. We must make her forget the past ; gladden the present ; and supply her with a hope and wish for the future. Perfect and entire separation from all present associations is my first prescription.”

“ I cannot consent to that, doctor. My darling Sibyl away from her home in her present state of mind ! I am convinced that such a severe measure could do no good : repose and rest surely would be better.”

“ I cannot agree with you, general, I am sorry to say.”

A pause ensued.

“ What is it you apprehend ? ”

I almost hesitated to say ; for the shock to him could not fail to be considerable.

“ It may subside, general, as quickly as it has arisen ; or it may terminate in brain fever, or madness.”

He turned a little white, and then arose abruptly.

“ The separation would, if anything could, bring about that result. You are too much accustomed, doctor, to that particular form of malady, and apprehend it when there is really no danger,”— and he tried to smile. “ I cannot consent to what you propose. I will not have the stigma of insanity placed on my daughter when she does not require it. We will try a little longer. But do not urge me on this point.”

Poor man ! as if I would have urged it unless I had discerned the sad necessity for it. I wrote a sedative prescription for her—it was all I seemed permitted to do ; recommended vigilance to Basil, and instant communication with me if any change took place. The next morning, before any one was up, I was on my way back to town. I

had a very sad foreboding in my heart that I had not yet seen the worst. But, however, I had other cases equally critical to share my attention, or, as the French say, “distract me.” I do think that, but for the constant succession presented to them, medical men would succumb altogether; for variety is relief, even in pain. I have known a man welcome a fit of gout, which succeeded an acute paroxysm of tic.

The winter commenced early, and before the close of November snow had twice covered the ground. About six weeks after I had quitted Strathsay Castle I received a few lines in Basil’s school-boy hand, begging me to return there immediately: “My sister is very much changed, doctor; we cannot tell what to do.”

I had little doubt in my own mind what had happened; and, with the utmost expedition, started as before. I passed again the old landmarks, noticing mechanically the change that winter’s mark had set upon them. The brown moors blended with the blue horizon, and the black leafless outline of the trees against the sky stood

out in bold relief as they appeared on the brow of the hills, bearing themselves with what strength they might against the wintry wind. There was the still shadow-filled tarn, and beneath the long clay furrows lay the wreaths of old snow, like the cold white remnant of an old love.

As soon as I arrived, I proceeded at once to the library, but had hardly been an instant with General Faulkner when Sibyl entered hastily,—I thought, with the intention of preventing any private conversation. She received me with unusual gaiety of manner, though I fancied she avoided catching my eye; and when I inquired after her health, she answered me with considerable asperity, as though she resented the question. Throughout the evening the same unnatural mirth was visible. She almost monopolized the conversation at dinner, and yet kept losing the thread of her discourse. She was, I saw, aware of this, and instantly started a fresh subject; evidently unable to recall the previous one, and yet anxious that her incompetence should not be perceived. Her incoherence was several times so perceptible

that we all felt it most painfully. Yet the slightest interruption or contradiction irritated her extremely. At length she struck the table smartly with her little hand:

“Silence!” she said, “we have talked till we are all tired, now we will rest.”

She was instantly aware that she had done something unusual, and began an apology, which died away on her lips as she looked round at us with a smile so painful, so anxious, and hopeless in its expression, that we sat, as it were, spell-bound. She then left the room abruptly. Basil slipped after her with the quickness of thought. That look said: My mind is slipping from its throne; do not mock me with your watchful eyes.

“Poor child! this will kill me if it goes on,” said General Faulkner, much agitated, breaking without reserve into the subject then uppermost in all our thoughts.

“I perceive, indeed, a great alteration.”

“Yes, my poor girl is sadly altered in every respect. I thought it would pass away; but

though it changes, it stays: she looks so thin and haggard in the morning, it is quite terrible." (She was, in fact, perfectly emaciated.)

" Does she shun society? "

" Occasionally; while again, she is quite cheerful, indeed gay."

Ominous gaiety I knew it must be.

" Is her temper irritable? "

" Oh, that," he said, " we think nothing of; it certainly is so, but can we ^{not} wonder? Her looks are what affect me most."

I said, " General, I observe an alteration, and an important one: it is that very change of disposition which is a symptom of the utmost consequence. Do you not perceive that she almost regards her own family with distrust, suspicion? her glance is averted and furtive."

" She is certainly, doctor, less affectionate than formerly; but poor Sibyl has had such sorrow as would make any of us careless and selfish, if not unkind," he continued, pertinaciously.

" Do you really wish for my professional opinion, general? " I said, determined to speak out.

“Certainly,” he replied, with an uneasy look; “it was for that I wished to see you.”

“Then, general, suffer me to take your daughter away for a time. It is my peremptory duty to tell you that her mind is giving way. It is, I do apprehend, insanity which impends over her.”

“Give me a few days to think it over, my dear doctor; you can surely spare a couple of days.”

I felt I had said enough at the time, and allowed the subject to drop. He lit his cigar and smoked on in gloomy silence. After all, tobacco has its commendable side. Probably, smoking is the same soothing sedentary occupation to men that needlework is to women. We sat together musing, and listening to the peculiar musical dirge of the wind, which had risen greatly since my arrival, and now blew in wild eddying gusts round the old castle.

I found that an attendant for Sibyl had been procured, who slept in the room which communicated with that of her young mistress. From her I learnt that the fits of somnambulism had entirely ceased; but, added she,—

“ Miss Sibyl often talks to herself quite wild-like, until I grow fearsome, sir.”

I recommended her, nevertheless, to lock the outer door at night and keep the key in her own possession; and we then retired to our separate apartments.

I tried to sleep, but slumber only came in broken fragments. Each time I dropped off into a doze, I awoke with a vague sensation of disquietude. At last I rose; there were still the embers of the fire; I stirred them into a blaze, and, opening the window, leant out. The night was a stormy one; a light sprinkling of snow was on the ground; the moon shone bright and coldly down on the earth, while the clouds were drifting across her almost as swiftly as stars are driven from heaven. What was that? Surely a human voice rose above the wailings of the wind. I listened with intense anxiety: after a few minutes I heard the same sound, followed by a strange prolonged laugh.

I lost not an instant, but hastily slipping on my clothes, and providing myself with a light

in case of need, I went as noiselessly as possible downstairs. The great door was unlocked and unchained. As I closed it after me, I noticed light footprints on the snow; and in following these I perceived also the track of the large deer-hound, Wolf. I was much relieved by this, as wherever Sibyl was, I was sure the dog would also be, and would protect her. I hurried on. The footprints crossed the park, then proceeded down to the side of a little torrent which fell from the hills, on the other side of which lay a shelter of forest trees. I crossed the little slender foot-bridge, and a scene broke on me which I shall not easily forget.

A group of silver birch-trees seemed to guard a little grassy glade, and spread their twisted branches partially over it. The moon fell directly on the white snow; and the deer-hound crouched down, and with his black muzzle resting on his huge paws, was gazing intently on the scene before him. And there, indeed, was Sibyl, like some pale fairy driven to desperation by strange spells. She had thrown a light fantastic gar-

ment over her night-dress, and she held in her hands a white scarf, which she was waving and twining round her as I have seen Hindoo girls do in their native dances. She danced with a marvellous precision and grace, but with an almost superhuman energy: the measure changed from slow to quick, but gradually, as though it were done to music inaudible to all but herself. So powerful was the effect of imagination that a certain wild music seemed to fall on my ears.

At length she stopped, and uttered the same unnatural laugh which had guided me there; the hound raised his head and gave a prolonged howl of response. Then she apostrophized the birch-trees and embraced their gnarled silvery trunks. I resolved to discover myself, and walked forward. She recognized me at once: she did not evince the slightest surprise, but welcomed me as if I were a bidden but loitering guest.

“ Ah, doctor! the spirits have called and mortals dance. Here they are—the pale spirits and the gnomes; there are others also in the air;

they sit whispering and mocking in the trees. In that spot lives the vampire. Do not look at him, doctor; his great eyes suck the heart's blood if you do. We were very angry with you to-day, but that is all over now; the thing necessary is to *dance*," she said, emphatically; and she almost dragged me into the circle.

I thought it best to humour her, and so ensued a dance, fantastic and melancholy enough, indeed, had any one been there to witness our performance—a maniac dance in every sense of the word. As she whirled round, I saw her eyes glittered brilliantly; but her face was deadly white, and her beautiful features were convulsed and drawn. Then she laid both hands on her breast and gave a smothered scream, and then snatched up handfuls of snow; after first tossing it about, she put it on her head, as though the heat of her brain was intolerable. I perceived her energy was slackening—a sign that her strength began to diminish—and I proposed that we should return to the house, reminding her that the dance was over and that the music

had ceased. Somewhat unwillingly, she consented to leave the spot.

“ Farewell, farewell!” she added, waving her hand with indescribable pathos and grace; “ farewell, old trees, and happy spirits. It will be long before we meet again here: never till it is to part for ever!”

She persisted in dancing all the way home; and would only proceed backwards, alleging that it pleased her to face the moon.*

The hound followed us with drooping head

* Somnambulism has also been called Moon-madness, whence the name Selenogamia, from *σελήνη* and *γαμέω*. That the moon exercises a peculiar influence upon the insane is unquestionably a popular superstition, as evinced by the very name of lunatic and lunacy, and it generally happens that these superstitions encrust real truths. Yet I have been unable in my own experience to find a case in which the moon exercised any well-marked influence. With certain nervous temperaments, the rays have a lowering effect, so as to produce cold shivers or depression; in some restless, sanguine temperaments, they act as a sedative. I was acquainted once with a family, the members of which were all characterized by extraordinary talent, but combined with such extreme eccentricity, and consequent behaviour, that they possessed the reputation of being “decidedly cracked.” These people, both male and female, always evinced a peculiar pleasure in exposing themselves to the moon’s rays. But none of

and dejected air. We gradually approached the house, though by a most whimsical and erratic course: the time seemed endless to me, for, as may be supposed, I was most anxious to get her to her room without encountering any one. But, alas ! I could not prevail on her to be silent for an instant, and what I would have given almost anything to avoid, did actually happen: the general stood, light in hand, at the head of the stairs. We passed him close, and as Sibyl did so, she looked in his face as she would in that of an utter stranger; dancing

these instances come decidedly within the category of insane patients. In epileptics the case is very different. The full of the moon is, I think, invariably attended by a marked frequency of the fits; some patients are obliged to be kept entirely in bed at this time. Dogs which are epileptic exhibit the same peculiarity. From the word selenogamia (somnambulism), it is to be presumed that the moon was also supposed to influence sleep-walkers. Burdach affirms, that these, even when awake, "contemplate the moon with intense satisfaction." And it has been attempted to explain by this their propensity for walking on the roofs of houses (?) N. P. Willis has written a rather curious tale called the *Lunatic's Skate*, which might well have been named the "Moon-stricken." I am ignorant whether his narrative is founded on any fact, or is simply a fiction.

and singing as she did so. He shrank back appalled. I signed to him to be silent, and we gained her room.

No sooner had we entered than a fresh change passed over her, and a perfect demon of terror seemed to take possession of her. She retreated to the farthest corner, and crouched down on the floor, shielding her eyes with her hand, complaining that I was killing her with "my evil eye." The least movement on my part only produced a worse effect, so I stood motionless. At last, she slowly, very slowly, removed her hand, and peered up at me with such a ghastly, hopeless, paralyzed terror, that it was months before I could forget it: that white face, with its parted lips and blank misery of expression, seemed so continually to haunt me!

I heard the old clock ticking with its sad monotony in the hall, and I was wondering how long it would have to do so before I could move from my position, when Sibyl raised her head, and pointed with her finger to the door, with a bitter and derisive smile.

She approached the door, and at the same moment I heard the general's steps steal away down the corridor.

At length the paroxysm spent itself: poor Sibyl was laid, white and almost lifeless, on the bed; and the heavy eye, and purple blotches on the skin, were evidence of what mischief had been at work. I may remark, that beneath her pillow I had found secreted the key of the bedroom door, which the nurse had by my directions generally locked. Insane cunning had already developed itself, apparently.

The wonderfully accurate delineation of madness in Shakspeare deserves note here. "And he, repulsed, fell into a sadness, then into a fast, thence to a watch, thence into weakness, thence to a lightness, and by this declension, into the madness wherein he now raves." Hamlet's simulation of what is technically termed "the incubation of insanity" must have been perfect.

General Faulkner needed no further entreaty from me. I administered an opiate to the poor

girl, and the next day, before the effect of it had ceased, she was under my own roof.

It is not necessary to enter into professional details in a narrative like this; it is sufficient to say that these attacks of mania continued to recur at intervals of less and less duration, and that for eighteen months I could not observe such material change as would indicate recovery. And yet from the very first, I had regarded hers as a hopeful case.*

One of my patients had formed a very extraordinary attachment for Sibyl. I say extraordinary, for madness isolates the feelings to the utmost pitch. But this was a sweet-looking, gentle, idiot girl. When on board ship from India, at the age of thirteen years, some terrible fright, of which I forget the exact nature, had injured her senses beyond any remedy. She had been seven years under my care, and during that time I cannot remember that she showed

* More recoveries occur in acute mania than any other form of insanity, and again, insane women recover in a larger proportion than insane men; but, on the other hand, they more frequently relapse.

pleasure in anything, save in the murmuring sound of an *Æolian* harp. She was accustomed to spend whole days in summer crouched by an open window listening to its melancholy music, and replying to it by a singular refrain of her own: *Allah, Allah*, prolonging the *ll*; and then would follow a long low laugh. Occasionally she made the vibration more musical and apparently satisfactory, by grasping the harp with her teeth.

Sibyl seemed smitten by a like taste. One might often see these two hapless beings together in the window recess, the idiot girl listening, and crying out her usual refrain, while the other, sometimes silent, would bend forward as if she expected to hear more, or would laugh and return incoherent answers to some invisible person. Sibyl once drew my attention to that fifth chord above, which, as most people know, always sounds after any given note. 'She told me long afterwards that she imagined these to be responsive to her music, and that Dara-cott, though invisible, always hovered by her

at such times. Indeed, throughout her illness, she was, if I may so term it, in an attitude of expectation; either her lover was coming to seek her, or was about to prove unfaithful to her: these two ideas alternated, and betrayed themselves in a thousand little ways, touching enough to any one who knew her sad history.

May had set in this year with far more warmth and beauty than usual; even my melancholy patients seemed to be cheered by the influence of all things round them, and to dream of days to come when they might yet hold hope to their poor worn hearts. I entered one of the smaller gardens assigned to a portion of my patients. Have you, reader, ever watched a number of lunatics in their recreation hours? It is a curious sight enough, and nowhere can that entire absorption of the feelings which is characteristic of the disease be better observed. You scarcely ever see two together, either in company or in conversation; each one walks alone, wrapt up in his particular delusion, whether of grandeur,

of woe, or of joy. Here also may especially be noticed the insane gait, which, when once distinguished, is one of our surest tests: how in some it becomes confirmed, and how it is lost in all as they progress towards recovery. One lady was walking stolidly round and round until her feet had worn a channel in the path, but she invariably stopped short at one spot, turned back and recommenced. Years ago there had been a flower-bed at that point, with rose-trees in it, and though for many a long month that had been removed, and laid down with gravel, the force of habit remained: the impression received when the brain was impressible, seemed indelible; and neither persuasion nor force could make her cross that invisible Rubicon.

I watched Sibyl and the idiot girl long and attentively; the latter seemed as usual. She was fondling about Sibyl, though little noticed, and her strange laugh broke on my ears as I stood watching them. There was a slight change in Sibyl. I noticed a kind of lethargic melancholy stealing over her, accompanied by a new and obstinate

set expression about the face. I was in dread of her illness taking the form of melancholy, or religious fixed delusion, and decided to try what a stimulating change of air would effect.*

In a few days I removed these two girls to a retired village on the east coast. The sea had even more effect than I had anticipated on both; for a very curious fact occurred, to which I do not remember any parallel. When the sight of the ocean first broke on poor Mona (this was not her real name, but one the idiot girl had somehow acquired in the house), she dropped to the earth in a dead, fainting fit. Here was a singular instance of the power of the laws of association. For seven years that girl had lived her harmless, silent, unconscious life, to all appearance without a memory, a hope, or a fear; then the sea is presented to her, and the mysterious rule of memory for an instant reasserts itself. The sea was, doubt-

* At certain times there are changes in the disease, and experience leads me to believe that just before the sixth and ninth months they may certainly be looked for.

less, connected with that disastrous period when she was bereft of her senses. The fainting fit, though of unusual length and severity, passed off, and she never again, as far as I could observe, testified any emotion of the kind, but, on the contrary, seemed to find in its murmurs, as it broke on the sands, an enjoyment fully equivalent to the wails of her much-loved *Æolian* harp.

With regard to Sibyl, the beneficial effect I have alluded to came on later. There was a marked improvement in her bodily health within the fortnight. At the end of that time, one morning her attendant entered her room and discovered that she had broken every pane of glass and piece of furniture, torn her clothes to tatters, and was disposed to personal violence. Here was evidently a sudden paroxysm of a severe kind; and there had been little to warn us of it, except that, as her lethargy seemed to pass off, and she appeared no more deaf or unconscious when spoken to, an excessive pride and exaltation of manners had been evident.

It may appear singular to non-professional readers; but this fresh outburst, coming at this time, gave me fresh hopes that her recovery was to be expected, sooner or later. As in death-scenes, just before the lamp of life dies out, there is often one quiver of extraordinary light, and a superhuman strength is granted to the dying one,—so I could not help thinking that this might be the last fierce struggle of mania before it finally succumbed and fled. I had her, of course, removed immediately; and for three weeks, without intermission, she raved so as to compel me to assign a gallery exclusively to her accommodation. Oh! how she raved; night and day alike! She seemed to know neither sleep nor rest; to feel neither fatigue nor pain, heat nor cold; there was apparently a complete loss of all ordinary sensation. I administered opium and other powerful medicines in the largest quantities that could be ventured, without the slightest effect. Worn, and wasted, and haggard, she seemed like some pale, restless shadow; for her exquisite grace

and pathos never forsook her even at this time.

One night, in passing her door, I heard her singing some song—I forget the words, but the burden was of the dreariness of life and the darkness of the world, and the refrain was an invocation that Heaven might bend over her and claim her. Ah, unhappy one! it wrung my heart to hear her. I almost prayed that Heaven would in mercy take her.

At first I separated Mona entirely from her; but it had such an effect on the poor idiot that I was induced to rescind my direction. Mona derived a childish pleasure from being permitted to crouch about the gallery and by the door, listening to Sibyl's voice, with an unmeaning smile on her face; after which she would betake herself to her favourite harp, and between the ravings of Sibyl Faulkner might be heard the wild cry of Mona.

General Faulkner received, of course, periodical accounts of his daughter's state; though, at my urgent instance, he had never sought an

interview. It has often been with difficulty that I have carried out my wishes in such cases. When an interview would do harm to the patient, of course my line is clear; but where it is eagerly wished for by the relatives, and would hardly affect the patient for good or otherwise, I still would always put my persuasion in the balance against it. And for this reason, especially where recovery is more than likely: when such recovery actually takes place, friends will thank you that they have never seen their loved one in the horrible paroxysms of madness; that they have not been permitted to burden themselves with the memory of so ghastly a picture: and patients will be thankful, and often have thanked me, for sheltering them from even loving eyes in their hour of woe and humiliation. Professionally we are compelled to witness these scenes so often that they lose their natural horror; and physicians, perhaps more than any other class of men, learn to separate the material from the immaterial. But, with a great majority, the sight of a wife, a sister, or a son, to all appearance

hopelessly mad, is a picture so painful and appalling, that it daguerreotypes itself on the memory for life.

Basil Faulkner was stationed with his regiment some little distance from town. As to Captain Daracott, I had also intelligence of him. That hollow and triumphant pleasure which is sometimes granted to sinners in this world, had been in his case more brief than usual, and his fall more shameful and disastrous. He had resided for some time with Mrs. Haveril on the Continent. She had plunged him into the maddest expenses, and he had also gambled and lost heavily. In short, he was ruined; and then, with that singularly steely cruelty which often distinguishes a woman utterly given over to a reprobate mind, she chased him ignominiously from her house, and it was understood that, goaded to recklessness, he had returned to England, there to face, as best he might, those he had every reason to fear.

I think Helps has somewhere said that Judas Iscariot might have done better than to go and

hang himself; and, doubtless, the greatest criminals have their chance of amendment yet. But there are some sins which have a perpetual back-flavour of remorse; and such are cowardice, ingratitude, treachery, and the like. And when I thought of the fruit of Daracott's misdeeds, the stern words of Carlyle recurred to my mind:—“Thy work, behold *that* has not vanished; *that* is not abolished; *it* remains, or the want of it remains for endless times and eternities. All else is spent and eaten. Where is thy work? swift! out with it! let us see thy work!”

Full of this thought, I visited Sibyl again; for indeed I was in a state of intense anxiety about her. I fancied that, though the fire of insanity was wearing out, there were indications that the fair frail temple in which it had wrought its havoc was even more swiftly passing away to the silent land,—“where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.”

She was laughing, as usual, and raved on in words to this effect:—“He answers only to

my music. Where the blue spirits dance it is beautiful; but so cold. Edward! Edward! Ah! unfaithful one! He does not hear me. I am giddy with whirling; and those old white stems choke me. The violets grow so thick over my heart that it cannot beat." (A pause.) "It was at the moon he howled. But the snow burnt my brain. Ah!" (here she screamed as though with pain,) "the tendrils are twining into my heartstrings, and the demon watcher is there. Yes, love, I am ready to go to the ball. But the spirits told me. Slyly he crept out from among the trees. Howl again, Wolf. Bay at the moon. But do not smile so on her—on her. Do not strike him, father. Howl at the moon, for it makes me mad—mad—mad:" and here she danced in horrible glee.

Now the reason I have thus transcribed *verbatim* this senseless raving is one of some little interest to the psychologist. A medical man, of very singular talent, once remarked to me that, in the ravings of mania (unlike those of Phrenitis) there was meaning, but not coherence; and that,

if carefully divided and compared, it would be found that two trains of thought apparently crossed each other, and that the sentences, so unconnected and unintelligible, really alternated with some regularity. I have since then repeatedly verified this observation, and I give the above, noted down on the spot, as a specimen. The two ideas, evidently, are her first attack at Strathsay Castle—the blue spectres and night music she heard there, with the vision of her lover when he gave her the violets, and was at the ball with her. I have separated the alternate sentences, and place them parallel:—

He answers only to my music.

Edward! Edward! Ah, unfaithful one! he does not hear me.
The violets grow so thick over my heart that it cannot beat.
Ah! the tendrils are twining into my heartstrings.

Yes, love, I am ready to go to the ball.

But do not smile so on her—on her. Do not strike him, father.

Where the blue spirits dance it is beautiful, but so cold.

I am giddy with whirling, and those old white stems choke me.

It was at the moon he (the dog?) howled, but the snow burnt my brain.

The demon watcher is there. (This evidently referred to my finding her in the birch-tree copse.)

But the spirits told me (this with much emphasis). Slyly he crept out from among the trees. Howl again, Wolf. Bay at the moon.

Howl at the moon, for it makes me mad—mad—mad.

It will be seen how far the above bears the remark out.* I left her, resolved to see her every hour, for I was convinced that a crisis must be near. The night was very oppressive; one of those fierce summer storms which sometimes sweep over us with such fury slept in the sultry air. Before long a gloomy breath of wind stirred all the trees for a moment, and then all was still again. I was sitting in my study, when a furious peal of the bell was heard from the front-door, followed by another and another in quick succession. A servant entered hastily, and handed me a card, whereon was inscribed — “Captain Edward Daracott.” The next instant Daracott himself strode into the room, and stood before me, a haggard, reckless, desperate-looking man. He dashed down a glazed military cap on the table, and exclaimed, with an imprecation,—

“ Miss Faulkner is confined here, they tell

* To what extent it supports the theory of the doubleness of the brain (*vide* Dr. Holland), or the duality of the brain (*vide* Dr. Wigan), is a question of some little interest.

me. I intend to see her. To-morrow I am to stand to be shot at." Here he ground his teeth together. "To be shot like a dog, by that young bloodhound brother of hers. I may as well see what I am to die for."

And he gave a laugh which contrasted ill with his ashy cheek and restless movements.

I looked at him steadily. I had not wronged that man in thinking he was a coward; and now his bullying, brutalized demeanour utterly disgusted me. I considered that such a thing as this might possibly have a reactionary effect on Sibyl. I knew that I could hardly overrate the shock it must be to him; and I thought it fitting that this man should see with his own eyes his direful handiwork.

I took up the light in perfect silence, and he followed me with the same air of dogged bravado. We traversed the corridor, gained the gallery, and I opened the door of the room; there, cruelly worn and wasted, but perhaps as lovely in her stricken state as in her happier days, stood Sibyl Faulkner. He staggered

when he saw her, as if he had received a blow.

She did not seem surprised; but, placing her finger on her lips, retreated slowly and gracefully to the other end of the chamber, and from thence looked earnestly at him, shading her eyes with her hand. She whispered softly, but distinctly—“Ah, Edward, come at last! Come to the ball, love! I have your violets.” And she drew a faded bunch of those flowers from her bosom, and made, as if in mockery, a deep obeisance.

He uttered a terrible oath. The sound of that voice made her start as if she had been struck, and she stood motionless, her eyes nearly starting out of the sockets. He turned and actually fled. I heard him blaspheme in the distance, but above his imprecations the cry of the idiot girl echoed shrilly. Then the hall door was slammed violently.

A minute after, a flash of lightning streamed into the room, so brilliant and lurid that everything looked of blazing fire, and was followed by a succession of short, sharp thunder cracks. Sibyl

uttered a great piercing cry, as though her very heart were rent, and then burst into a flood of tears; the first I had seen her shed. She continued to weep without restraint, as though she were weeping out all her pent-up miseries; and I remained with her, careful not to check this salutary change, and rejoicing from my heart at its appearance, which I knew must augur good. I had been twice summoned away, but would not leave her until she slept.

When I did quit her room, I had to encounter, in another part of the house, a strange and horrible spectacle. There, surrounded by affrighted domestics, sat, or rather cowered, Edward Daracott, ashy pale, scowling, silent, but blind—*stone blind!* That very flash of lightning which had, as though by instinct, forced that despairing cry from Sibyl's lips, had struck him thus, with the haunting picture of Sybil, as he last beheld her, indelibly stamped on his brain. Uninjured in other respects, he was hopelessly, incurably blind.

* * * *

Two years from that time Captain Daracott died. And so terminated a life dimmed by sensuality, and dishonoured by treachery and cowardice. One of his relatives told me afterwards, that the singularly retributive feature of his punishment lay, not in his blindness, but that, owing to that blindness, he had never been able to change or chase away from him the image of poor Sibyl as he saw her bereft of her senses.

As my readers will divine, Sibyl recovered gradually and slowly, but perfectly. Whether it was that her interview with Daracott happened at the precise instant when the brain, worked up to the utmost pitch, was on the turning-point either way or no, I cannot say; but I date the commencement of the favourable change from that salutary and welcome flow of tears.

For many months she was, to all appearance, a gentle, silent-stricken girl; and perhaps a slight melancholy and a certain tinge of timidity will

always cling to her. But time is a mighty river, and bears away many a human woe on its broad torrent. And in a few years Sibyl learned, in a happier love, to lose the memory of the one who had cast so dark a shadow over her early life. There is an old and very beautiful saying I have once heard,—“The waters that have passed the mill grind no more.”



THE LUNATIC ENGINEER.

“A PERSON by the name of Vyner has called twice since you went out, sir,” my servant told me, as I was casting off drenched over-coat and cape, on my return from a long ride through a pitiless November storm of wind and sleet.

“Man or woman?” I asked.

“Woman, sir—very respectable person.”

“Did she leave her business?”

“No, sir; she said that she would come again about eight o’clock, and that you would remember her name.”

“Did she? Show her into the library immediately she returns.”

I ran over in my mind a tedious list of friends, patients, and casual acquaintances, but without

recollecting anybody of the name of Vyner; and having dined with the appetite of a hungry man, I drew my chair round in front of the fire, and became deeply absorbed in a case of much interest, which had appeared in the last number of the — Having concluded the final paragraph, I laid down the paper, and essayed to compose, in my own mind, a system which should utterly upset the theory of the author. I was completing this task to my own satisfaction, when the bell rang, and my man ushered in a small person in black, whose precision and neatness of appearance the boisterous weather out of doors had scarcely disturbed at all.

She came forward as I moved my chair, and meeting an attentive but quite unrecognizing regard, she said,—

“ You don’t remember me, sir?” but as she smiled, the shadow of something that had been beauty a great many years ago, moved over her countenance, and I vaguely discerned in the quiet, unobtrusive little person who stood before me, pretty Mary Vyner. Pretty Mary Vyner

had been once as well known by that name among the students at Guy's as any public character. There is a period in the life of every single woman, when, if there be any latent unloveliness in her face or character, it becomes conspicuous in a hard and ungraceful prominency, which at once catches the eye. Either there had never existed in this case any secret ugliness for time

reveal, or Mary had successfully tided over the dreaded period ; but the smooth skin had lost its youthful freshness, the bright hair its lustre of gold, and the blue eyes their innocent gaiety long since. What remained was a perfect picture in miniature of a lonely and struggling woman, much faded and a little saddened, it is true, but otherwise quaint, unpretentious, and self-possessed to a remarkable degree.

“ You don’t remember me ? ” she repeated ; and this time with a slight accent of disappointment ; but when I gave her a seat, and said, “ Yes, I know you now ; you are Mary Vyner, at the toy-shop at the corner of the Borough Road.” She appeared pleased, and replied that she

thought it would have been strange if I had forgotten her, so good as I had been to her and her mother. "The toyshop's long gone, and we live out of the city now," she explained, "and we have seen a many changes; but I don't know that we ever got into a real difficulty until this autumn, and last night I said to my mother, 'Dr. —— has always had a strange fancy for people out of their minds, and I'll go and ask him what we ought to do; if anybody can help us, he is the most likely to do so.' So this morning I put myself into the omnibus—it's a long way, sir—but I shall not stay at my cousin's this night, as I meant to have done if I could not have seen you until to-morrow, for I promised my mother to go home as soon as I could; and go I must, for it is dreadful anxious work to watch him: that is why I made bold to call three times at your house this day, sir."

"Tell me the trouble, Mary, and for auld lang syne you may be sure I will do my best for you, be it what it may," I replied, patiently.

With women it is the briefest way to let them relate their story in their own digressive fashion, and as I was busy, and had many things to look to before bedtime, I refrained from hurrying Mary.

“It is kind of you to say so, sir; but I was sure you would,” she returned: “and you’ll promise to keep it to yourself, as well?”

“A professional secret, is it, Mary? Certainly you may confide in me.”

“Well, sir, we had got Mr. Robert Meredith at our house. You will remember Robert Meredith?” (this with faint hesitation).

“Yes, Mary, perfectly. I saw him in town about a couple of years ago, looking stout and strong, and apparently as gay as ever.”

“Indeed, sir, but he is not stout and well now; nor gay either. My mother and me, we both think he must be going some way wrong in his head; but some of them that ought to know, say he is as right as ourselves.”

“What cause have you for your suspicions? Give me some details, Mary.”

“He behaves so queerly, sir: he rants and raves to himself all day and all night nearly. He will have my mother to wait on him hand and foot, and it is too much for her at her age. He says we keep a machine in the room over his head, and are always playing on him with it, and his last notion was, that we have a plot amongst us to poison him. All his fancy from beginning to end, sir!” she assured me, somewhat unnecessarily.

“Is he ever violent?”

“Dear heart, sir! yes. One night last week he rushed into the kitchen, and snatched up one of the heavy chairs, and brandished it above his head, swearing he would smash poor Jane; but my mother heard his voice, and went and ordered him to put it down and go back to his room, and, after staring at her very sullen and savage for a minute, he did. Mother is never afraid. She has the mastery of him, or I do not know what we should do when he has his tantrums. She speaks to him, as one does to a naughty child, and then he is quiet; but that night, and

ever since, she has turned the key on him and kept knives out of his way."

"You have no other men in the house with him, have you?"

"No, sir, we have not; and it's not safe with him, and we but three women, and quite by ourselves. Some friends of my mother advised her to apply to the magistrate, and get him removed; but when we did, and the gentlemen came to see him, they pooh-poohed all we said, and declared that he was as sane as anybody else. One gentleman said he thought we were all mad together."

"That was very singular conduct, Mary."

"Well, sir, he *is* that crafty and sensible at times, he would almost impose upon yourself, unless you believed us against him."

I asked Mary how it happened that Robert Meredith was with her mother, and why they had not, in the first instance, appealed to his friends and relatives.

"He does not seem to have any friends left," was the rather sadly delivered reply. "It was

in the spring, when the new railway branch was begun, that he came to us. We let our front room, and the curate we had for a many years was leaving to go to a living some one had given him. So our lodgings were empty, and a paper in the window, when he called. He did not know it was our house, he said, sir, though the name is on the door; but perhaps he had not noticed that. We had not seen him I can't tell you the time when."

"And how did he look, Mary? did he seem in any way different to other people?"

"No, sir, for he did not look well-to-do in the world" (Mary did not mean this sarcastically); "he said he had come into that neighbourhood in the hope of getting something to do on the railway, and was in search of a cheap, quiet, clean lodging,—and ours *is* that, sir—and it ended by his staying with us; though I cannot say my mother had much heart for it. But I remembered him so different; and I felt sorry to see him so down-spirited, and wishful to do the little we could to help him."

“Just like you, Mary. And how did he behave at that time?”

“All quiet and regular, sir; paying on Saturday nights as sure as they came round, and going in and out, and working at the plans and papers like any other gentleman that is clever in that way. But I think he was disappointed in not getting employment where he expected, and the gentlemen who used to call for him at first dropped off one by one, until at last nobody ever came to the door, and he as rarely crossed the threshold to go out. It was then that I began to notice something queer about him. He got out of temper at the least trifle; more often with me than with my mother, though: I don’t know why. Then he pinched himself of necessary food, and we guessed he was badly off by his falling behindhand in his payments. He often complained that he was shamefully treated, and that his enemies had made a league against him, and it all sounded so real that we did not suspect that his mind was going wrong, until it was told to my mother that he had been taken

care of in an asylum once before: abroad, I think it was.

“Indeed,” I said, “I wonder whether that was so; you did not hear the particulars?”

“No, sir, but only knowing that much, shocked and startled us, as you may suppose, never having heard of it before. But we could not find in our hearts to give him notice, though he kept on getting worse and worse; until a good many people told my mother that the only thing she could do if she wanted to be rid of him, was to shut the door on him, and *then*, if he conducted himself eccentric in the street, the police would take charge of him. It seemed so hard and cruel that, didn’t it, sir? My mother said she never would consent to it. But the day after the scene with Jane and the chair was very bright and sunny. We were, perhaps, over frightened to act quite reasonable and right ourselves, and when he went out in the morning, we agreed that if he came back before night we would tell him that we could not do with him any longer, and that he must seek other

lodgings, to which all his things should be sent as soon as we knew where it was."

"That was a very good resolution, Mary; for unquestionably you and your mother ought not to be subject to the caprices of poor Meredith to this extent."

There was a little pause, and she continued, not without an effort,—

"At noon he did come, sir, and I listened in the parlour while my mother spoke to him herself, and hardly could she get the words out for crying; but he went away, without answering one word: and if ever there were three miserable women, it was my mother, and Jane, and I, that night, as we sat listening with our hearts, as well as our ears, and longing, nobody can tell how anxiously, to hear him at the door again. None of us would go to bed, for we felt ourselves such wicked wretches for what we had done."

"And then?" I said, curious to hear the end of this very feminine reaction.

"I'm sure, sir, if it had been a prodigal son returning we could not have rejoiced more than

we did when we heard a step like his outside. We did not wait for him to knock, but ran all of us and opened the door, and in he came; but, oh dear! he was shaking, and shivering, and so white. He said he had not tasted bite or sup since the morning, and if we had not taken him in he should have walked the streets all night."

"And since that time, Mary?"

"Since then, sir, he has been just as he was before, haranguing and making such noises in his room, that people in the street stop to listen. Only yesterday the policeman came in and told us that it was not safe, and that we ought to represent the case at the police court. But I said I would come and see you: you knew him, and all of us, and people would take your word for it, maybe, if you said he was mad, though they would not take ours."

"I will tell you one thing, and that is, that you have all acted in a way that has shown not only kindness, but bravery; but from your account it is quite clear that the sooner Robert Meredith is removed from under your care the

better. I have business in the neighbourhood of Fulham to-morrow, and will try to despatch it before dark, and about your early tea-time I will drop in and see him. You need not communicate my intentions; and if he is as ill as you describe, I may perhaps prevail on him to come back with me for a time."

"Oh, thank you, sir; I could not bear to think he might ever come to be ill-used," she replied, with fervent gratitude. "He didn't behave very kind to me; but I would do almost anything rather than give him a cruel thought for that."

Good little Mary! I guessed that well enough.

"And what has become of his rich wife, Mary?"

"They could not agree, so she took her money, and they parted," said she, dropping her voice, as if the very mention of *his* unhappiness was to be made with tenderness and reserve.

"They had no family, I think, Mary, if I remember rightly."

"No, sir; there is nothing, as it were, to them together."

“He might have done better, and lived more happily,” I said, half unconsciously, as my mind recalled many a scene in the days that had gone, in which both Mary and Robert had played their part.

“I can’t say, sir: he thought not,” was her humble reply; “and bygones are bygones.”

She rose, with a rather saddened expression on her wan, kindly-looking face, wished me good-night, and went away, relieved and comforted by my promise of help, as she gratefully assured me. As she faded out of the room, the shadow of pretty Mary Vyner as I remembered her twenty years ago, came into it.

That was in my student days, when I was serving my time as assistant with Mr. Meredith, then a surgeon, with a large and lucrative practice in Lambeth. Robert Meredith was his only son. He exhibited no inclination for the medical profession, and had been brought up as a civil engineer. Being a few years my senior, he was on the point of establishing himself and working on his own account, when I first went as resident

pupil at his father's house. He was then twenty-four years of age, and a dashing, handsome youth in appearance. His abilities were of a very ordinary kind, and nature had not furnished him with the gift of presenting them in the most available form. His vanity was as feverish and greedy as his intellectual power was limited; he cared so little for his own esteem, and so much for the admiration of others, that when his own powers disappointed him, or he failed in heading his opponents, he was as moody, crest-fallen, and dispirited as in general he was gay and self-complacent. His temper was violent and variable, but by no means bad. As to his principles, they were not good—they were not bad, for they were altogether nil. I do not think that anything in the form of serious, steady, fixed abstract principle had ever presented itself to his imagination. If it ever had, the reception had not been such as to retain it for a permanency. Too weak to govern, he was too irritable to obey; and from the desire always to be the first in whatever society he frequented, he was driven, as an inevi-

table consequence, into seeking low company. Men like Robert Meredith do not, except under a particular combination of circumstances, find their way into the felon's dock ; but it is men such as he who crowd our bankruptcy court, who fill our debtor's prisons, and people our hospitals and lunatic asylums.*

Neither my sentiments nor my pursuits accorded with those of young Meredith ; we were friendly, for the obligations I owed to his father were of no ordinary kind, but we were never intimate. One point of mutual attraction we had in common with other young fellows of our date, and that was the counter of the toyshop in the Borough Road, behind which stood pretty Mary Vyner.

The simplest excuse sufficed to carry us there twice or thrice a week ; now it was a silk guard

* There is an observation of Dr. Mayo's on this head, which, understood with the cautious and delicate precision with which it was made by the author, appears to support this view. "Even the bad, if their vices have been erected into principles, are *so far* less liable to insanity than men of virtuous tendencies, but of casual and uncertain impulses."

chain to be repaired, or a watch to be fitted with a sixpenny key, or it was some wonderful toy for a new juvenile connection. Though our wills were liberal, our purses were light; but Mary could have served us as pleasantly with a penny-worth of pins, as with the costliest Noah's Ark, or the largest rocking-horse in the shop. We all had a sincerely respectful admiration for her; and, in truth, her frankly self-possessed air was as irreproachable as that of her widowed mother, who had brought her up well and religiously: indeed any one who should have mentioned her name lightly, or rudely, would have been promptly voted an ill-conditioned fellow, utterly unworthy of a word or a glance from the object of our youthful worship. Probably Mary's pretty golden-haired head was made the sun and centre of more than one boyish romance; but I cannot affirm that she ever distinguished any one of her admirers above the rest. They were not of her class, and very few of them were of her age, and her mother was a sensible woman, who anticipated no happiness in encouraging any nonsense of the kind.

In process of time, however, it was rumoured among us that, though Mrs. Vyner looked coldly on him, Robert Meredith was making for himself a warm interest in her daughter's heart. At first we received this intelligence with incredulity, then with dismay, and lastly, with a conviction of its being a disgusting truth: for Robert mentioned it to me himself, declared that his intentions were honourable, and wondered how his father would look when he was asked for his consent. The acquaintance had reached the crisis of betrothal already; they had exchanged rings, locks of hair, and those numerous other trifles which are understood to be the proper and distinguishing marks of affection on these occasions; they were plighted lovers, and had made up their minds to marry at once and live happily for ever afterwards, in spite of friends and relatives, inequality of condition, and differences of education. Mary's face was lovely, and her heart was warm and true as that of the most grammatical of women, and Robert Meredith, in the full burst of a young man's passion, had no

prescience of the time when she might set his teeth on edge with a mispronunciation, or make him blush by her unconscious derelictions from the usages of polite society. I never could exactly tell how it occurred, but so it was, that a whisper did reach the ears of some portion of Mr. Meredith's family, that it was the attraction of Mary Vyner's company which drew young Meredith so much from his home, and that unless prompt measures were taken to prevent so inexpedient a marriage, Robert would certainly make her his wife.

Feminine curiosity carried his sisters to the toyshop, to behold, if possible, the plebeian beauty who had succeeded in fixing the affections of a young gentleman who had in all his love affairs hitherto displayed a singular fickleness of purpose. They were good-tempered girls, but it would, under the circumstances, have been asking too much of woman's nature to expect that they should say more than that "they wondered what Robert *could* see in her." Whether they communicated directly with their father, or ma-

naged that he should be warned from some other quarter of the threatened *mésalliance*, I cannot affirm, for they did not take me into their confidence ; but in some way Mr. Meredith was made acquainted with the matter. The consequence was that an explanation was demanded, and refused : whereupon a quarrel followed. Meredith asserted that he was his own master, swore that he would keep faith with Mary, insulted his sisters on her account, gave his father the lie, and conducted himself in as unconciliatory and foolish a fashion as it was possible to imagine.

His father treated him, as it seemed to me, with a certain amount of contempt.

“ It is a mere freak, a month’s whim ; you have changed your mind before, and you will change it again, and then the girl will be left to break her heart, and curse the day she ever listened to your nonsense.”

“ That is all you know about it, sir ; she is the loveliest girl in all England, and I’ll make her my wife before I am a year older,” retorted Robert.

“I know you, my son, and I know her: she is too good for you, in my opinion; but I'll make a bargain with you. You shall go abroad for twelve months, and I'll send Mary to the school at which your sisters were educated. If you are both of the same mind at the year's end, it shall be a match; but not before. If you won't agree to this, you may do as you like; but you will never have another shilling from me.”

Robert sulked for a few days, but finally acceded to what was really a kind and liberal arrangement on his father's part; and Mrs. Vyner's reluctant consent to the business, so far as Mary was concerned, having been extorted, the poor girl was taken from the toyshop, and placed in the hands of two women, able and conscientious indeed, but altogether unaccustomed to this particular kind of material for a pupil.

To make Mary Vyner as fluent, fashionable, accomplished, and impertinent, as a great majority of the young ladies who annually

issued forth from that establishment, was not a work of months or years, but was simply a feat impossible to perform. The *gêne* on the one side, and the labour on the other, had probably been affliction of a sufficient kind for both instructress and pupil; for after a few weeks of this discipline, Mary came home to her mother. When I one day called, in passing, to inquire of the widow how her daughter liked her new residence, I found that young lady, blooming and blushing behind the counter, and as popular and admired as ever. She said simply, and I dare say truly enough, that “she did not like the school, for the smart young ladies flouted her.”

By this time her engagement to Meredith was well known in both their respective circles of friends, and though his family refused to countenance her since she had left the school where she had been placed, he was considered a very likely man to take the bit between his teeth, and have his own will on the matter: indeed there was no reason to look upon the marriage as otherwise than a settled thing.

About Mary Vyner and the school, and her lover, I had two very settled opinions: one was that she did in every way far excel any young lady at that, or any other school, in appearance and general excellence; and the other was, that the most ordinary and least successful of the pupils who had been Mary's associates there, was infinitely too good for Robert Meredith. I had not attained the age of nineteen years, and therefore my ideas were a little strong on this point; experience, however, justified them, or at least a part of them, in a way I had not looked for.

Meredith corresponded regularly with Mary while abroad; he acquiesced in her returning to her mother's roof, and there was no ground of quarrel, or complaint alleged, or even hinted at, between them. Mary said afterwards that he had never given her a wrong word, or a single reason to suppose he had altered his mind. Yet one day his family was electrified by the announcement of his marriage with a Miss Joanna Styleman, only daughter and heiress of a certain Sir Anthony Styleman, Knight, a wealthy citizen

whose name was good on 'Change for many thousand pounds.

Mr. Meredith brought the letter and *The Times* newspaper into the surgery, looking the picture of annoyance and dismay, and asked me if I were friendly enough with the Vyners to go and break it to the poor girl.

“I always said that Robert was the most infernal ass I ever knew, and now he has proved my words. Upon my honour I don’t know how he ever came to be son of mine, Paul. I am sorry for *her*, but she has had no great loss in Robert: I say so, though I am his father,” the old gentleman observed.

I muttered something which might be accepted as assent or dissent, whichever was most acceptable.

“Between his wayward temper, and his unstable and shifty mind, his wife, whoever she may be, will have a good deal to endure. One may almost be justified in hoping that this Miss Joanna Money-bags will get the upper hand of him,” he continued, grimly, putting on his spectacles to reperuse the offending paragraph.

But though Mr. Meredith spoke thus, I did not think in my own mind that he had at all a sufficient sense of the infinite scoundrelism of his son's behaviour; and so little did he comprehend Mary, and so utterly inadequate were his ideas concerning her real dignity and worth, that before I set off on my distasteful mission he called me back, to instruct me that if the Vyners threatened to make the broken promise a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence, he should be willing to lay down a fifty or hundred pound note, if that would compromise the affair. So I departed on my errand, and walked along slowly and moodily enough until I reached the toyshop. I lingered a little outside, having hardly heart to announce my business, and unable to find a form of words which satisfied me for the purpose. I could catch a glimpse of her through the window, looking so calm and happy, and then feeling myself growing worse instead of better, as far as fitness went, I made a violent effort and entered the shop. Mary was blithely setting forth to the best advantage the most tempting of

her wares, it being the hour of noon, and therefore the most prolific of her young customers. It was not my usual time for calling, and I suppose that circumstance, combined with my troubled air, which I was unable to conceal, gave an instantaneous impression that something untoward must have occurred; and this something could only refer to Robert, on whom her thoughts ran night and day. To gain a little time I asked her where her mother was, whereupon she led me in silence to the small gloomy parlour behind the shop. Then I told her all: rather abruptly I am afraid, but I did it the best way I could. I gave her the letter, and the newspaper, that she might be sure that it was no idle rumour. She carried the letter to the window, under pretence of seeing to read it better there; but she could not have gone through more than a line or two, when she struck her hand on her heart, uttered a terrible cry, and fell to the ground.

There is no need to record the progress of those convulsive writhings, to recount the pitiful moanings in Mary's room, or to detail how

the heart-break slowly healed. She bore it—we will not ask her how; and she reappeared in her accustomed place behind the counter: not pretty Mary Vyner any more; though, with her good and pure expression of countenance, she could never be unattractive in any man's eyes. I saw her one day when her old uncle Vyner, a farmer of the rough-hewn type, chanced to have journeyed into London; and when he beheld the wreck which sickness and sorrow had made of her beauty, he shook his head ominously, grasped his thick staff, and swore a great oath that, if ever her cowardly lover came across his path, he would "make him remember it to the last day of his life." Whereupon Mary lifted up her meek eyes and expostulated, averring, in Robert's behalf, that she, poor thing, was not half lady enough for him, and that she did not want to hear him blamed; with such other woman's special pleading as we have almost all had to listen to in our time, not without great chafing of our temper and much vexation of spirit.

It was not until more than a year afterwards, that young Meredith brought his wealthy wife to make the acquaintance of his own family and friends ; and so far as any esteem or favour she found among them, she might with advantage have absented herself for an indefinite space of time. I did not envy the husband over whom she ruled with such a bitter and vindictive authority. Most unquestionably she had the upper hand : must have had it from the very first, I imagine. She was his senior by twelve or fifteen years, and was the kind of woman to make a man ready to hang himself twenty times a day. In appearance she was a tall, bony, hungry-looking person, with a coarse and suffused complexion, light-coloured scanty hair, and eyes that, from being destitute in a great measure of their natural adjuncts of brows and lashes, looked absolutely colourless and shadowless. I will not describe her voice, save that Miss Meredith declared to me that “ it rasped her ears like a file.”

“ She has many diseases, Paul, my boy,” said Mr. Meredith to me one day ; “ some are real,

some are imaginary, but the worst one is what poor Bob calls her ‘very deuce of a temper.’”

In search of specifics for her ailments, she dragged her unlucky husband about from the dull dissipation of one watering place to that of another, and kept him in a state of complete subserviency by stopping the supplies if he evinced a disposition to mutiny. She had insisted on his abandoning his profession when she married him, and had taken every precaution in the way of settling her property on herself, so that he was literally dependent on her for every sixpence he had to spend. I hate to speak so of a woman; but my words are quite within the mark. Of one good deed she was the unconscious instrument—she avenged poor Mary’s wrongs daily, and with a turbulent severity that would have brought the tears to those gentle eyes could they have witnessed it. One night, while the husband and wife were staying at Mr. Meredith’s on this visit, I happened to be at the Vyners, and the servant-girl, ignorant of Robert’s person, admitted him into the parlour where we were

sitting. I must do him the justice to say that I think he would never have intruded *there*, but that he was excited with wine; this I detected at a glance and attempted to get him away again, but did not succeed until he had poured out a flood of disconsolate confessions to Mary and her mother; and he wound up this discreditable scene by asking Mary, with sentimental recklessness,—

“Do you remember we were true lovers once?
Ah! I was mad when I left you!”

If she remembered! I shall never forget the dumb heart-broken look on her face as she shut the door on us both. I literally dragged him into the street. *If she remembered!* What made her life lonely, Robert Meredith? What withered her youth in the bud? What had taken the brightness from her days, and the pleasantness from her dreams? What had turned her bloom and beauty to cold gray pallor, but that she remembered, and remembered too well, that you had been her lover once!

The maudlin fit had passed away with the

sight of his old love, and his outrageous gestures and wild expressions of anger that night would have alarmed me, but that I knew his violence was commonly of an evanescent kind. He insisted on pouring into my reluctant ears such a history of his conjugal wretchedness as convinced me that a man can hardly do a deed which more certainly entails retribution of the most prompt and unendurable description, than marry a woman whom he does not love, and who does not love him, for money, houses, or land. It is a way of selling himself to the devil: and the very worst way; for that personage claims his bond and the penalty without one intermediate instant of bliss from the moment the church door is passed.

The matrimonial squabbles of the Merediths became public property before they had been married a couple of years; but about that date old Mr. Meredith died, his daughter married, and I ceased to have further communication with any of them. I was absent from England five or six years, and when, after a considerable interval, I was established in the neighbourhood of

town, I had completely lost trace of the Vyners. The toyshop had disappeared altogether, and all that I have narrated had slipped from my memory until that wild November night, when Mary presented herself at my house and supplicated my help for the unfortunate and miserable cause of her own life's long unhappiness.

Meredith himself I had seen at long intervals ; but our circle of friends and our pursuits were entirely different, and no intimacy of any kind was attempted to be kept up. At his father's death, he had some small means left at his disposal, but he quickly dissipated them by a combination of hard drinking, reckless gambling, and ill-advised investments, and then returned to the bounty—and yoke—of his wife. The last time I had seen him was, as I told Mary, about two years before ; he then wore a sufficiently thriving appearance, talked somewhat largely of *his* possessions—at which I was hardly able to preserve my countenance—and left me certainly with the impression that he and his unpleasant helpmate had worn their chains smooth at last,

and bore their fate with greater outward equanimity.

* * * *

“ You see, doctor, this is the Great Heart line, the centre of the entire system ; allow me to demonstrate to you the conditions of its working, and the result which may certainly be expected. You observe this nucleus, this—this—it will necessarily diverge into a—” and here he lost the thread of his ideas, and lapsed into angry confusion, exclaiming, “ What, in the name of all the devils round and about, is Mary playing that electric battery overhead for, when I have commanded both her and her mother time after time to leave it alone ? ”

He made a plunge at the bell-rope, rang it vehemently, and continued jerking at it without any pause until poor old Mrs. Vyner answered the call in person. She stood in the doorway, very erect and still, looking calmly and steadily at her lodger without speaking. For a moment he seemed to have forgotten what she was there for, and, putting his hand to his head, he was evidently

about to furnish some excuse—perhaps from not wishing to compromise himself in my presence—but a glance at me revived the idea, and he said, in a fierce, peremptory manner,—

“Mrs. Vyner, tell those miscreants to stop that infernal battery this instant.”

“Yes, sir,” returned she, without moving a muscle of her face, and retired.

Directly afterwards we heard a step overhead, and the removal—made ostentatiously noisy—of some piece of furniture. To this he listened with a satisfied expression of countenance, and when it ceased he resumed his seat before the table, and again displayed his Great Heart line, drawn on a sheet of cartridge paper, and recommenced his endeavour to make me understand it. He called it a system of railways which was to embrace all England; the branch lines were to radiate symmetrically from a centre, which was rudely drawn in the shape of a heart: some divisions were coloured blue, others red; in order, as he said, to prevent any collision.

It does sometimes happen that madness, when

it attacks a dull-headed man, has the effect of sharpening the wits amazingly in one particular direction. I have seen patients so circumstanced draw plans, and execute little models of machinery for scientific purposes, with a degree of ability to which, in their ordinary state, they were thoroughly unequal. But this was not the case with Meredithe. It was not a brilliant scheme, halting only in one important particular: it presented none of the excessive originality which is occasionally so striking in a madman's conceptions; but it was as impracticable as if it had been the most dazzling theory. The drawing was neat, and showed dexterity of the pencil, but the rest was on a level with his natural capabilities. He was essentially a common-minded man, with commonplace ideas: madness with him did not develope, it only disjointed. Again and again he reiterated the particulars of the Great Heart line, its junction, its terminus, &c.

“It *must* succeed: it *shall* succeed—it cannot help succeeding,” he said, emphatically; “but it will ruin every man jack of them when it does,”

and they know it—*they know it, sir*,” sinking his voice, and laying a finger on my breast. “ You see it now, don’t you? They have made a league against me: they are my enemies, my enemies, my enemies!” And here his voice grew hoarse, and he fairly shouted out the words, dashing his hand on the table until he made the whole room shake.

In a little time the fit passed over, and he said, civilly,—

“ You’ll stop tea with me, won’t you?” To this I acceded, and Mrs. Vyner presently brought in the tea-things, which she placed separately on the table. As she laid down a couple of knives, she turned her eyes full and steadily on me for an instant, and then proceeded with her employment in her usual measured manner. I accepted the intimation in the same undemonstrative fashion, while Meredith scrutinized her movements with suspicion legibly inscribed on his countenance. He watched her butter the bread, put the tea into the pot, and, desiring to have an egg, he made her bring a little

pan and boil it on his own fire, excusing his watchfulness to me by observing,—

“Under my own eyes, sir, and then I shall have no tricks played. I find every precaution necessary; at any chink—*any* chink, sir—my enemies may creep in.”

Mrs. Vyner submitted cheerfully to his preposterous regulations in all but one instance. He wanted her to hold the tea-pot while he filled it from the kettle, in order that there might be, as he said, “No conjuring with the hot water.” To this she gave a sturdy refusal.

“Put the kettle down, sir,” said she, in a voice perfectly calm, resolute, and soft. “I filled it from the tap with my own hands, so I am sure it is all right; and I don’t want you conjuring and scalding my feet again.”

He looked very much ashamed, and obeyed her like a rebuked child, dropping the kettle into its place, as if it had burnt his fingers.

While we sat over the meal, he gave me some incoherent particulars of his recent mode of life, which, however, always got mixed up in a state of

inextricable confusion with the Great Heart line. At certain moments he appeared dimly conscious of his singularity, and made some very slight attempts to recover himself; but he soon lost all command over his ideas again. The name of his wife excited him to a state of awful fury; he asserted that she was the root of iniquity, the distilled essence of all abominations, the head and front of all offending, and that but for her and her diabolical intrigues the Great Heart line would have passed, and succeeded long ago.

Ever since Mrs. Vyner had been in the room, he had been in perpetual movement from one chair to the other, shifting his seat every two or three minutes, and selecting a fresh resting-place; before seating himself, in each case, he lifted up the chair, turned it round several times, and carefully dusted it.

Now, the more unaccountable and odd the actions of the insane, the more certain it is that they are the results of hallucinations; which may be of any kind, of sight, taste, hearing, touch, smell, &c. I thought I had the clue to all these

anomalous operations, and resolved to chime in suddenly.

“ You are seeking a chair where you can’t feel the electric shocks, I suppose, Meredith ?”

“ Right—quite right,” he said, joyfully. “ I am ; but,” he added, with a puzzled air, “ how did you find that out ?”

“ I guessed, from your movements, what you fancied.”

“ Was that all ? You didn’t feel the shocks yourself, then ?”

“ No ; I only saw you were uncomfortable, and remembered you had mentioned a battery.”

“ I’m understood at last,” he remarked, graciously. “ And what do you advise to obviate this inconvenience ?”

“ Insulate yourself, to be sure,” I replied, promptly, determined to make my company acceptable to him.

“ Exactly, certainly ; an excellent idea. I see. If I could sit upon a glass-legged stool,” he said, looking round the room rather hopelessly for that not very common article of furniture.

“ You can sit upon a hair cushion,” I replied, scarcely able to keep my gravity; “ hair is a non-conductor, you know. Tie a silk pocket-handkerchief round your head, and keep your legs off the ground, that will be all that is necessary.”

He tied up his head, elevated a chair by placing each of the four legs on a short stool, and seated himself thereon, carefully holding up his feet, so that they should not come in contact with the floor. He looked the picture of absurdity and discomfort, in one way; but apparently the precautions had the desired effect of preventing the imaginary shocks from reaching him, for he seemed pleased with his situation, and quite inclined to retain it. Having succeeded in ingratiating myself thus far in his good graces, I approached, with the utmost caution, the subject of his returning with me for the purpose of paying me a visit, and enjoying a little change of scene. I saw instantly that I had excited his suspicions, though he tried to dissemble them with me. He replied, in a tolerably collected manner,—

“ Why, you see I am very well off here ; these people are attentive, and *inclined*—only inclined—but still they *are* inclined, to be obedient and respectful. My enemies have not corrupted *them* yet,” said he, knitting his brows, and peering at me from beneath them with a dangerous and meaning expression of eye. “ But at your house that she-devil would find me out. How do I know *you* are not in the same league with her, and the rest of them ? Not that I doubt you—oh, no ! but I must beware, I must beware ! I’ll trust nobody but Mary. It’s a secret ; it’s a secret, you know—more than life depends upon it : it would bring people from the ends of the earth, if it were known : it is a marvel, I tell you—a marvel ; and they want to suppress it. And they are powerful, are my enemies ; they are *very* powerful, sir. But I shall smite them hip and thigh. I shall break them in pieces yet, like a potter’s vessel.”

Robert Meredith, in his early youth, in the days when he was Mary Vyner’s lover, had been as handsome-looking a young fellow as is gene-

rally seen. He had grown broader and much stouter now, and his visage, as his rage rose, swelled and reddened hideously; while his blue eyes stared and rolled, and became like two black spots, from the colour changing in the iris. He stamped up and down the room, uttering all those fierce, incoherent threatenings, which are the commonest language on the lips of madmen; while I watched him, quietly waiting for his aimless wrath to expend itself before I made another attempt. Presently I heard poor old Mrs. Vyner's slow footstep coming towards the door. She opened it, and said decisively, but kindly,—

“Mr. Meredith, you must be quiet; we cannot do with that noise.”

The influence which certain sagaciously-minded and calm-tempered women have over a particular class of insane men is marvellous, and is on occasions most valuable. Robert Meredith instantly stopped, and with a mixture compounded of sullenness and mortification returned to his chair. I had seen enough to convince me that

his state was dangerous both to himself and to others, and was determined not to leave him with these two poor women one night longer. I found that he would not agree to return to my house, or, indeed, accompany me anywhere, being convinced, as he declared, that I was paid to conduct him into the very heart of the enemies' camp; so I left the room to have a little conversation with Mrs. Vyner, and to propose to her the only plan I could suggest as being practicable.

I ascertained that for several months past these good, kind, unselfish, forgiving creatures had been literally maintaining Meredith out of their scanty means. When they discovered that he utterly refused to accompany me, they were even more than disappointed, they were completely dismayed. They had supposed that I had a sort of spell, by which I reduced refractory patients to immediate docility, I think; and now their incubus seemed doomed not to be moved by any other hands than those of a policeman. The knowledge of the state of their fast diminishing resources, made them painfully

aware that they could not maintain him much longer—even supposing his violence should not increase, which was improbable enough; and it was with tears in their eyes that these two women besought of me to watch over him until he could be placed where he would be kindly treated.

“I could not bear to have him ill-used, sir,” reiterated poor Mary; “I’d work my fingers to the bone rather.”

I made up my mind to stay the night in the house, and the next day, having made known the necessity of the case to an athletic youth (one of the much maligned class called medical students); he cheerfully agreed to keep Mr. Meredith company for a few hours, and to devote his best attention to understand the intricacies of the Great Heart line, which poor Robert was only too pleased to explain. I then ordered my horse and rode over to the villa, some half-dozen miles out of London, where Mrs. Meredith resided. It was a pretentious-looking place, but standing in very ample grounds. I delivered my

card, and was soon seated in the drawing-room, awaiting the lady's appearance ; anticipating a sharp contest, I armed myself with an ample store of patience and politeness. When she entered, I felt that time and absence had not increased my admiration for her in any one particular. She was the only woman I ever knew—and I record this fact with pleasure—in whom I never could discern one charm, no, nor a remnant of a charm. She had never looked young, and seemed now unable to succumb with grace to old age. She had the hardness of some people who possess much gold, without the cleverness and shrewdness of those who have learned somewhat in acquiring it. She manifested neither surprise nor regret when I informed her of her husband's state : indeed it is even now with a feeling of disgust that I record our conversation ; carried on, I ought to assure my readers, in the most courteous and studiously gentle tones on my part.

“ But, Mrs. Meredith, surely your husband has a right to support of some sort ? ”

“No right at all, sir: not to one farthing, during my life, or at my death; so that if you or any one else think to worry and torment me into my grave before it pleases God to take me,” she remarked (the last words with an unctuousness which almost turned me), “they may desist as soon as they please, for they will get nothing by it.”

“Do I understand you, madam, that Mr. Meredith has no control at all over *any* money—yours or his own?”

“None—every farthing is tied up: settled on *me*” (this triumphantly).

“He could draw it out in your name, madam: husband and wife are one, you know,” I continued; not unwilling to provoke her into perfect confidence and clearer and more definite admissions of the true state of the case.

“He can *not*,” she retorted, irefully; “my money is paid to me, into my own hands, through *my* agents; I give it to whom I like, or I give it to nobody at all” (the most likely I thought), “and I leave it to whom I like, and that will certainly not be a drunken, insolent——”

“ Ah, madam !” I interrupted, “ refrain, I entreat you; your husband is heavily afflicted, and if we were all to have our deserts, which among us would escape the whipping-post ? Suppose he were to insist on residing with you ?” I put this in the interrogative form, but I fear that either the last supposition was utterly intolerable to her, or that she had taken my allusion to the whipping-post in bad part: for though she made no reply, and affected to continue her work, I could see by the trembling of her hands that she was excessively irritated. It is not good in a case like this to give a woman leisure to reflect as to the best mode of putting her rage into a practical form, so I continued with increased gentleness: “ Have you no pity, Mrs. Meredith ?”

“ None whatever.”

“ Consider what the disgrace would be if it were known that your husband were literally starving, or dependent on the chance charity of others.” I did not say *whose*; I reserved that as the last arrow in my quiver.

“Money of mine he neither can nor shall have; and he has insulted me enough to make me stick to what I say. I defy you all: so take your answer and begone.”

“Well, madam, that is your opinion; now let me tell you mine.”

“It won’t go for much with me; but have your say,” she replied, with the most unfriendly of glances.

“Thanks. Then, madam, what I have to remark is this—the facts may be legally as you state, but law is one thing, and equity is another. There is such a thing as the Court of Equity; and if I try the question out of my own pocket, we will ascertain whether that tribunal has not some jurisdiction in this matter.”

Evidently this remarkable female had studied these things, and not in vain; since, from her change of countenance, I perceived that she had, as was natural in her unscrupulous state of mind, imbibed a decided distaste for equity courts. She avoided meeting my eye, therefore, but, nevertheless, resumed, though with

diminished confidence, “I defy you, sir, and the whole lot of you.”

“I do not defy you, madam; I implore you only. Reconsider the case. If Mr. Meredith lives, he has it in his power to annoy you in a hundred ways, sufficiently shameful and distressing to you, and degrading and injurious to himself, without you having any power to obtain redress: you cannot undo your marriage; you cannot rid yourself of him.” (That useful court over which Sir Cresswell Cresswell so admirably presides did not then exist, and my statement was therefore substantially true). “And if he remains insane, assuredly an appeal to the proper court will be made: unwillingly, I entreat you to believe, in one sense; but from necessity it must be made.” I paused; she was staring steadily and vengefully at me.

“Well,” she said, “what then?”

“I will tell you what I think that court will direct. It will order you to set apart out of your income a certain sum, probably three or four hundred per annum, for his maintenance

in a suitable place; or, in default of this, and as the only other probable course, it will be ordered that you shall maintain him in your own house, with a proper attendant to take charge of him: this you will find not only a troublesome, but an expensive way, Mrs. Meredith."

"And supposing," she said, jerking the words slowly out—"supposing I do neither one nor the other, and that I leave him to die in the kennel or the workhouse, as he deserves to do, and leave England altogether?"

"You cannot take houses and land, Mrs. Meredith: believe me, the lawyers will track you if you go to Kamtschatka. Do not be unjust to the better part of your nature." I might as well have talked to a stone, and I saw it, so I sped my last bolt. "How will you bear to have it published in the newspapers that the husband of the wealthy Mrs. Meredith is now, and has been for months, subsisting on the charity, and lodging as a pensioner in the house, of a woman, who was once a very lovely girl, and more, who was once his betrothed wife."

I had not overrated the effect of this cunningly devised speech. Her head and hand shook convulsively with the hardly suppressed storm, and she actually stuttered with rage.

“Is that so, sir?”

“It is so, madam, upon my honour.”

“Then, get him—get him away from there—from there, sir, and never let me see his face again—never again, mind that?”

I waited as if to hear the remainder of her proposal, or rather command. She appeared to be steadyng herself to some effort, and wishing to assist her in coming to a proper conclusion, I observed,—

“I am to understand then, that you will pay for his support elsewhere.”

I fear it was a reaction, rather than a resolution for which I had waited, for these were her next words:—.

“I will do this much: I will allow him twenty-five pounds per annum, for him to live in another place; to be paid quarterly,” she added, as if, at the reflection of her own munificence, her heart failed her.

“ That is a little more than a shilling a day, a little less than a servant’s board wages, madam.”

But I need not further describe this unprofitable and disgraceful scene. It will suffice to say that she consented to name fifty pounds as her ultimatum; and this liberal allowance was, as she acidly remarked, “ to find him in clothes and extras.” And then she bade me begone, and let her see my face no more. It was not one so charming to me as to make me regret having to take my leave. Old Mr. Meredith had been very kind to me as a boy, when I stood in need, and my mother also, of a man’s counsel and assistance. I was now launched in a practice that secured me an ample income, and therefore I resolved to take the charge of Robert’s maintenance on myself, and receive him with my other patients. I determined further that I would liberally reimburse Mary Vyner and her mother, for what they had laid out for him, and that I would set aside the rest of the fifty pounds, and let it accumulate, so that if my efforts to restore poor Meredith to reason were success-

ful, there should be a small sum in store, sufficient to enable him to emigrate and try his fortune in other lands.

* * * * *

Many years have elapsed since that day, and in a corner of my house poor Meredith is still living; the wreck only, in person as well as mind, of what he once was.

He still explains each day, each hour, each minute, the theory of his Great Heart line, to any one he can get to listen to him. He still draws again and again the old plans, and is for ever demonstrating the beauty and perfection of the scheme, the impossibility of its failure, and anathematizing the malice of his enemies, who prevent him, he says, from carrying it out, and being crowned King of the Earth. It is third-rate engineering gone mad.* Any new listener

* M. B. de Boismont mentions a curious case of a patient who turned perpetually on his heel; he had been, it was ascertained, an old engineer, employed for many years in the establishment of Dr. Blanche, and had perfected a plan, by means of rotatory machinery, of raising water to an immense height.—*Vide BRIERRE DE BOISMONT on Hallucinations.*

he welcomes eagerly, for he has long since tired his attendant out.

And once a month, or perhaps more frequently, a little slender, calm, sad-looking woman calls at my door, with some trifle, such as water-colours, brushes, paper, and the like, or some little curiosity in the way of mechanics—some ingeniously constructed toy, such as might be supposed to be an acceptable present, or a small addition to the few pleasures of a lunatic engineer ; and I think that as long as Mary Vyner lives, that shadowy little figure will continue to haunt my house until the day of Robert Meredith's death.

LUNATICS AT LARGE.

1. WAFFLING WILL.
2. JEAN OF THE ISLES.
3. WANDERING GEORDIE.

THERE were days when mendicancy was uniformly sheltered and supported, by a charity ecclesiastical in its source, semi-voluntary and semi-obligatory in its nature. In our day the union workhouse is the first, last, and single resource of the extreme poor; with the solitary option of enrolling and diffusing their wretchedness in that vast army of itinerant vagabondism which so largely absorbs casual charity and so infinitely disappoints amateur benevolence.*

* It is a curious fact that whereas the spirit of the times leans towards the abolition of *all* tests, so that we have relieved Dissenters, Quakers, &c. and employed much ingenuity in making a loophole for the Hebrew race, we have within the last twenty years, imposed a most severe one on

If any artist of that school which has specially devoted itself to expound and illustrate the ethics of Christianity and civilization, were to choose this subject, I think two pictures might be produced equally sad and impressive. In the first, the poor should crowd round the abbey gates, waiting on holy ground, beneath the gray and time-stained walls, and receiving in humility and thankfulness that which was offered to them in Christ's name and for Christ's sake. The quiet darkness of the woods; the silver trout stream, belted by the rich meadows, where the lowing cattle graze; the farewell warmth and fading gold of the setting sun,—in a word, all those fair and pleasant things which make this earth dear to the sons of men, and of which the monks of old were reputed (and not without

poverty *pur et simple*. Practically we say to the broken-down labouring man, "when you have arrived at that point of misery and hunger that you will leave your wife and children, enter and eat, but otherwise not." And this naturally presses hardest on the man or woman who has been respectable, and has loved and cared for his belongings, while it passes lightly over those incorrigible tramps who have no wives or children, or, at least, have no objection to lose sight of them.

reasonable evidence) to be such discriminating judges,—should be indicated in the background. The other picture should present, in appalling contrast, the outcast homeless crew, who, in the long nights of our northern winters, crouch on the pavement about the portals of the overgrown workhouses of our vast metropolis, with features debased in type, ravaged by disease, or, more often still, disfigured by violence; with eyes weeping hot tears, and lips muttering sullen curses: a crowd of human faces shivering, ravenous, thankless in their very thanks, and abject even in their mutiny! This spectacle is to be seen in all its enormity in our city, throughout the winter months, by any one who chooses to go for that purpose; as is very well known to Londoners.*

* At the peril of having the indignation of all the guardians on my head, I maintain that our union workhouses are our national disgrace and shame; in theory and practice, their organization and administration alike. That a man, so soon as he becomes a pauper, should be draughted far from all his belongings, is not the worst evil, for those who lose wives and children are generally beyond sentimental considerations of local attachments; but, glancing merely at the daily evidence

Of course it would not be desirable, even were it practicable, to return to the dole of the monastery, or to the parish allowance of the old poor law; it is sufficient here to say, that the first and second order of things became no longer possible, and so arose the third and present, of which, perhaps, the best that can be said is that it has a certain capable ugliness about it, which is seen to least disadvantage in the country and presents its most disagreeable aspect in large towns. But whatever amount of painful thought is produced by these considerations, there is also to be contemplated in the present day another step which has been taken in the interests of the human race; it lies somewhat in the same direction, but not wholly, being rather a sister

contained in the London journals, there is enough and to spare of the vain applications of the houseless for shelter, of the starving for food, of the repeated refusals which even the police, sent armed with most peremptory messages by the magistrates, have to encounter, and of the insolence and brutality generally of the workhouse officials. As to the physical and moral health and disease which exist, a little quiet conversation with a medical officer or a workhouse chaplain will afford ample testimony of the most disheartening kind.

offshoot, springing, indeed, from the same source, and running to a certain degree parallel thereto, but being one which admits of approbation without alloy. I refer to the gradual growth of regulations, which, introduced partially and ineffectively centuries ago, have been carried out latterly with a more discriminating and rigorous humanity: *i. e.* those which transfer imbeciles and lunatics from the dominion of their own fears and fancies, or the uncertain relief of private charity, to the care and supervision of the State, and recognize, by a special and elaborate machinery for their benefit, their rightful claim, not merely on philanthropists as such, but on the more durable basis of public law.

In the times when Shakspeare wrote *King Lear*, “poor distracted men,” as they are termed by the old writers, were avowedly permitted to wander about the country as they would. In D’Israeli’s *Curiosities of Literature*, first series, vol. iii. p. 354, there is curious information given from certain old authors respecting these wandering lunatics, known as “Toms o’ Bedlam,”

or simply “Bedlams.” D’Israeli himself speaks of them as being patients whose cure was equivocal, but who were discharged from Bethlem Hospital owing to the limited nature of its resources. “Harmless (?) lunatics, thrown on to the world, often without a single friend, wandered about the country, chanting wild ditties, and wearing a fantastical dress to attract the notice of the charitable, on whose alms they lived.” Sir Walter Scott seems to have first suggested that they were in fact a kind of out-door pensioners of Bethlem. Randal Holme, in his *Academy of Armory*, book ii. c. iii. p. 161, appears to have held them to be at least as much impostors as madmen. “The Bedlam,” he says, “hath a long staff, and a cow or ox horn by his side, his cloathing fantastic and ridiculous, for, being a madman, he is madly decked and dressed all over with rubins (ribands), feathers, cuttings of cloath, and what not, to make him seem a madman or one distracted, when he is no other than a wandering and dissembling knave.” Probably Holme had in some degree confused the real with the counter-

feit, for there was no doubt a set of pretended lunatics called “ Abram men,” or “ Abram coves ” (whence the expression “ to sham Abram ”), who made their affected infirmity a cloak for thieving.

A manuscript note transcribed by D’Israeli from some of Aubrey’s papers runs thus: “ Till the breaking out of the civil wars, Toms of Bedlam did travel about the country ; they had been poor distracted men that had been put into Bedlam, where, recovering some soberness, they were licentiated to go a begging, *i. e.* they had on their left arm an armilla, or iron ring for the arm, about four inches long, as printed in some works ; they could not get it off.” But Decker observes in his book, that “ the impostors who assumed the character of Tom o’ Bedlams for their own nefarious purposes, used to have also a mark *burnt* in their arms, which they showed as the mark of Bedlam.”—*The English Villanies* of Decker, c. xvii. 1648.

Afterwards this liberty was retrenched in cases where, either on the part of relatives or friends (so called), there existed selfish reasons why these

men or women should no longer be at large, or possess the control of their property: or where, on the other hand, they had by their mad and crazy pranks become a nuisance and a terror to others. This last not always, as many of our grandfathers and grandmothers would readily have testified, had they been alive to do so. At the present day, with very few exceptions, and those existing only in the most retired districts, and less in England than in the sister countries, *all* poor imbeciles and lunatics are gathered and sheltered in public hospitals or asylums, where scarcely anything additional can be wished for as regards their well-being and safe custody.

Thus far we had not, however, attained fifty, or even five and twenty years ago; and among the generation now beginning to grow grey, there are few whose lives have been passed at a distance from towns, and in rural and unfrequented parts of the country, who fail to bear in their memory the picture of at least one or two unfortunate beings of this kind; often, it may be, connected, as in the present instance, with some tragical

story. And when we take into consideration the entire absence of any control over the wild and motiveless vagaries of these poor creatures—any recognized home for their necessities—any hospital for their sickness—warmth or clothing for their bodies—food for their hunger; I say the utter lack of all these things, or any certainty of their being offered in moments even of most extreme need without being sought, has occasioned many sad disasters: as indeed reason would naturally predict, and as experience has most assuredly verified. There were many varieties of insanity thus represented, and many degrees of severity of the disease. Thus not only in the hamlets which nestle in the valleys lying at the foot of our mountains—or hills, if that be too grand a word for English scenery—did congenital (*i. e.* born so) idiots abound; but wherever adverse sanitary influences of a particular kind prevailed: as, for instance, bad water, foul or damp atmosphere, drunkenness, or much inter-marriage, they mostly resembled each other in the general type—the head was large or small, but

always in excess one way or another; the limbs were ill-formed and clumsy; there was visible a pervading stupidity of gesture and expression, an astonishing greediness for food, and an absence more or less of all control or effort to control the natural passions: as, for instance, anger, fear, &c. It was, in fact, a modified form of Cretinism, where the vegetative system enormously preponderated. Some cases were infinitely worse, and, to the thoughtless eye, more fearful and revolting to behold. A more particular description need not be given, as the above is sufficiently accurate for general purposes.*

Totally distinct from these were the still more unhappy ones, who (now less frequently, but in olden times often enough) were known indiffer-

* This form has been variously named by different writers. Thus with Esquirol it is *Imbécilité Idiotisme*; with Mason Good, *Fatuity*; with Sauvages, *Stupiditas*; with Plocquet, *Anoia et Apathia*; with Swediaur, *Moria c. Amnesia*. And the German psychologists, who vie with each other in producing a complicated nomenclature, have invented separate names for themselves; thus, *Idianoia*, brute instinct, Leppich; *Stultitia*, Eschenmayer; weakness of the personality, Ritgen; absence of idea and will, Heinroth.

ently as daft, crazy, mad. "Mad Jack," "mad Tom," "crazy Bet," or "crazy Kate," were common names for them. These were in almost every instance insane patients labouring under chronic mania, who, having been originally of sound mind, but attacked by illness, or, far more often, heart-broken by some grievous mental shock, occasionally in the case of women succumbing to some sudden and overpowering alarm, had become distraught, and, owing to circumstances, in the majority of cases hopelessly so. Far from any populous district where legal compulsion might be brought to bear on their proper treatment and custody (and, as regarded the last, this malady was so completely, in simple piety, looked upon as the direct visitation of Providence, that it was seldom had recourse to), it resulted that the period immediately following the first attack, when the chances of successfully assailing the disease by medicine are immeasurably the greatest—this golden time for the physician—too often swiftly passed sway and was lost for ever.

The distinguishing feature of this class was that they all either entertained insane delusions (whether of moment or of comparative in consequence), or else were subject to hallucinations (whether of sight, or hearing, or both combined). The degree in which these unfortunates were dangerous, depended on how far they could bear to hear their delusions questioned or contradicted in the first instance; and in the second, on the kind of hallucination which troubled them, and the extent to which they obeyed these promptings. On this account in particular they never could be looked upon as perfectly harmless. Perhaps for these reasons they have always been preferred as a theme by novelists, inasmuch as, from the wildness and uncertainty of their vagaries, and the irresponsibility attached to their actions, a greater amount of dramatic incident could be introduced without violating probabilities or producing a too painful effect on the mind of the reader. Sir Walter Scott's Madge Wildfire, and (in her latter days) Meg Merrilies, seem to me very perfectly drawn representatives of this type.

The third class are those who were called indifferently half-witted folk, naturals, or fools,—resembling in no degree the court fool or jester of olden times, from whom was required, as a matter of course, considerable shrewdness and dexterity of speech; whereas the poor creatures in question were essentially shallow-witted, with brains not inert nor wanting in activity, but normally deficient in size and quality, and, as a necessary consequence, in power. They laboured under no special delusion; unless, indeed, occasionally an undue sense of their own importance could be esteemed as such. Their distinguishing traits were a great and unsuspecting simplicity, often amounting to credulity, and a total inability to concentrate their attention on any given subject. In some of them there was visible a kind of surface cunning, just strong enough to suspect, without reason, the motives of others, combined with an irascibility easily aroused and as easily allayed. They were, according to the simple and pious belief of the rural poor, recognized in all cases as being under the special pro-

tection of God, and the very term usually applied to them, of “innocent” or “natural,” significantly expresses the universal feeling towards them.

I have fancied that I have observed a distinction made, perhaps intuitively, in the application even of these two names: “innocent” being generally used for the idiotic class, as creatures incapable of conceiving a thought, whether good or evil; and “natural” being applied commonly to the half-witted, as pointing to those who act on impulse, and without being guided by reason, or able materially to profit by instruction. I may be accused of giving reins to imagination if I assert that this is always so; but I think *generally* that the name is given accordingly as they incline more or less to the appropriate character.

It is worthy of note, that, in examining the number and amount of disasters, the extent of the consequences, and the amount of grief and affliction which have flowed from this source, *i. e.* the laxity of the laws concerning provision for these unfortunates, it is demonstrable that the

harmless, *i. e.* the innocents, naturals, or idiots, were on the whole the authors of as much misfortune as the more dreaded and suspected maniac.*

How and why this is so, will be illustrated by the instances which I am about to record. Two of them occurred in my own experience, and the other was related to me by one who was all but an eye-witness of the catastrophe. Their nature is indicated by the title; and the

* In these divisions I have omitted all notice of those whose mental disease takes that form known as *melancholia*. These patients, in former times, were to be sought for under the various denominations of misanthrope, hermit, anchorite, ascetic, miser, wizard, or witch. Such characters are not unknown in these days; but the middle ages were, from tendencies easily understood, more fruitful in producing them. Many of the reputed holy men and women of old, who clung so passionately to an austere and gloomy isolation, were labouring under this description of madness. Remorse for some real or fancied guilt was commonly the first reason for which they fled society. And next, in virtue of that law by which human nature seeks relief by expiation, came fierce demands for the infliction of some atonement in suffering and penance; and if the last took the form (as it was nearly sure to do) of enforced solitude, of rigid fasting, or of severe vigils and self-inflicted bodily agony, all the agents necessary to produce that particular condition of body and mind which most often entails melancholy madness, would be in active co-operation.

only merits to which the narrative can lay claim are those of being treated with thoughtfulness and related with fidelity, and as such, possessing some interest for the psychologist.

Waffling Will.

MORE than five-and-thirty years ago I was a hungry, happy, careless-tempered scholar at Merchant Taylors', where, notwithstanding the somewhat severe discipline, my health and spirits were all that any sanguine parent or guardian had a right to expect. Suddenly some epidemic broke out; I was not among those who were fortunate enough to escape, so, holiday and change of air being prescribed for me, it was arranged that I should be sent to stay some months with a relative who lived a couple of hundred miles to the north. Some of the boys were similarly situated to myself, in everything except the professed home; and I still remember the group of emaciated, eager young faces which collected round me at parting: for it is always the un-

claimed, homeless lad whose heart yearns on these occasions. Now, my destination was a sheep-farm, situated in one of the dales lying on the northern confines of one of England's largest counties. To the north side of the rambling old house was a tract of moorland, broken by a good deal of craggy, uneven ground, and in several parts spotted with bog and morass. It was partly bound by a range of high hills, which intercepted the view into the next dale. The house itself faced to the west, and on the left, southwards, the line of country was altogether different, comprising fertile land, partly arable and partly meadow, well planted with belts of fir-trees and other sorts of wood, and presenting fair tokens of good cultivation. The roads, which were excellent for the times, were not, however, what would be thought tempting now, and were necessarily much unfrequented; for the nearest habitation was upwards of five miles distant. The range of hills ran westward for nearly three miles, and then broke away due north. The path across them used by the

shepherds was indicated by one or two rude attempts at a sign-post, and a few heaps of stones; but the first had succumbed to the elements and were laid uselessly on the earth, and the second were only very imperfect marks through the snowdrifts which made winter so terrible in these districts. The farmhouse was a rambling old place, hedged round with "lean-to's" and "teufles," provincial terms which require interpretation: a "lean-to" means one of those hastily run-up sheds which have one side only; while a "teufle" (two fall) signifies an architectural attempt of a nobler kind, the roof falling two ways; but both "lean-to's" and "teufles" rest, though in unequal degrees, on to the original farmhouse.

I found my kinsman rough-mannered, but kind-hearted: he welcomed me with hospitality, installed me in a wooden chair in the wide chimney-corner, and at once accorded me a liberty in my actions, my incomings and outgoings, which transforms almost any place into paradise for a school-boy. From that moment

he took no notice of me in particular; and I was free to choose my own friends and amuse myself in any way I thought proper.

* * * * *

It was during the fleeting golden days of fading summer, that I first made acquaintance with poor Will, or, as he was commonly called, “waffling Will,” or, sometimes, “winsie Will.” And I dare say that I experienced no greater pleasure than when I descried the lengthy, attenuated figure of the poor natural, advancing along the fields with that devious, shambling gait so characteristic of his condition.

Waffling, the reader is to understand, does not mean *daffling*, but is a provincial word, signifying, I believe, uncertain, wavering, incapable, or fluctuating in ability: “poor waffling thing!” is a phrase of either reproach or compassion. Other name, that is to say, surname, he had none; neither could I ever learn from local tradition, or by hearsay, the derivation of the word *winsie*: what it meant originally, or was supposed to mean now. Not winsome, assuredly,

for even a mother's fondness would hardly select the word winsome, as fairly applicable to the vague and witless smile stamped on poor Will's features. No mother's care had he ever known. He was a half-witted foundling, such as would now oscillate between the union workhouse and the county pauper lunatic asylum ; but was in the comparatively unenlightened days of which I write, beyond the ken, and thus *de facto* out of the jurisdiction, of beadle or parish doctor. He therefore found himself in all respects free by prescriptive right of custom to walk God's earth in sunshine and in shade, by light of moon and stars ; breathing fresh air, and enjoying perfect liberty, none letting or hindering.

Will's appearance was rather striking. He had a thin, tall, misshapen head, but his features were somewhat delicate in form, his cheeks were tightly drawn over the bones, and of a brilliant and almost hectic colour. His eyes were large, and of that undeniably blue which is chiefly to be met with in the turquoise ; but they were dimmed and near-sighted in expression, so that

he looked, as indeed he was, half blind. He used to wear an entire suit of coarse dark blue serge, which seemed to serve him alike through winter and summer; and he was wont in *all* seasons, hot and cold, to cool or warm himself, as he affirmed, by tossing his arms about, and executing other eccentric movements. A more harmless, kindly creature never existed, nor one more ready to place the few accomplishments which he possessed at the disposal of others; and with the easy equality and ready affection which pervades the associations of boyhood, we soon became the most firm and intimate of friends.

Now Will's accomplishments were three in number: the first being the one which was in my eyes the greatest and most enviable. It consisted in a wonderful instinct for divining the haunts and best places for the larger kind of fish, and an extraordinary knack of catching them in his hands, without the assistance of fishing-rod or weapon of any sort. One would have supposed that the dimness of his vision would have been an insurmountable obstacle to

his success, but it was not so; perhaps he could see better under water than above; but the fact was as I have stated. In the neighbourhood of some rocky burn, the passer-by was often startled by perceiving the nether extremities of Will, sunk shaft-like in a hole, or half depending from the branch of some gnarled and overhanging oak-tree, from which post he would pry with strained and eager eyes into the calm depth of some favourite pool; and there exultingly descry the doomed fish. I have given the precedence to this qualification, because it was in the first instance the link which bound us together.

The second was in relation to his supposed adoration of fire; in which respect he appeared worthy to have been a descendant of the ancient Persians. Whether that element had really any special fascination for his mind or no, I am not able to state; but in virtue of his known partiality for it, he was installed wherever fire or flame was, either on the hearth or on the moor, as a sort of guardian deity. When the period arrived for the heather to be fired,

the day of jubilee came round for poor Will, and over the heaps of kindled rubbish, which in autumn are perpetually to be seen in the fields, he equally presided. Thus employed he was most indefatigable in stirring up the embers, and collecting fresh fuel, &c. ; and would gladly, and in fact often did, spend the whole night in the open field. This singular taste might be simply the natural instinct for the warmth pre-eminently necessary to such an attenuated and insufficiently nourished frame ; and the prevailing superstition (which certainly was that he did in some fashion worship fire) had possibly first arisen from the sight of Will's crouching figure, made visible in the darkness of the night by the ruddy glare, kneeling with his long thin hands extended affectionately over the object of his supposed adoration.

The third accomplishment (do not smile, reader,) was the gift of performing on the Jew's-harp ; and this he could do with a persistency and strength of wind and purpose really surprising. As might be predicted, his reper-

toire was not very extensive ; the choice of available melodies being restricted to about half a dozen, and these (with one exception) of a rapid and inspiriting kind. They were so, perhaps of necessity, not only from the universal call, among a rural audience, for “dance music,” but because the nature of the instrument was not such as to be favourable to the execution of any sustained movement ; being in this respect about on a par with the bagpipes.

Perhaps there will be some curiosity felt as to how *any* tune, even of the simplest kind, could be played on the Jew’s-harp, but I must confess that poor Will’s mode of performance was not a strictly legitimate one, and consisted in making the hum of the harp as it were the groundwork or bass, while with his voice he sounded forth the particular tune which was asked for. Any more singular combination than that poor, thin, quavering voice trying to produce the tune of some ancient jig to the dead buzzing of the Jew’s-harp, it is impossible to conceive.

From the hospitality inherent to the inhabitants

of these scattered hamlets, it is probable that a friendless, unowned being like Willie, seemingly alike incapable of offering offence or imagining mischief, could both at that time and the present have found without difficulty a subsistence adequate to his slender requirements in the food and shelter which were sure to be offered to him in his perambulations about the country, irrespective of any service he might be able to perform in return. The plan he adopted was to make a circuit on foot of about eighty miles in circumference, selecting the houses for repose in a certain rude order of his own. But even in this he did not rule himself by a strict routine, but was ready to alter it to a more devious progress, or change it for one directly retrogressive, if requisite, in order to convey messages, parcels, or execute any other errand for the convenience or necessity of his entertainers. But owing to his known special qualifications as a votary of the piscatorial art, of music, and of fire, he, in a manner, repaid that generosity which he received, and as it were yielded a sort of feudal acknow-

ledgment, by which he in return acquired the privilege or right of shelter and protection. I have reason to think from some fragmentary portions of his conversation with me, that he had a great secret pleasure in the fact, that this acknowledgment was openly made; and this was not from pride or independence, but from the underlying sentiment of gratitude in a humble and loving nature. Such was Waffling Will; of all the licensed wanderers which then abounded, the most harmless, obliging, and inoffensive. From these considerations, it naturally arose that at certain periods and festivities, Will was not only a welcome guest, but was in some measure regarded as a necessary one,—these seasons being fish-spearing, sod-burning, bonfires in general (for whatever cause), merry-makings, dances, weddings, and the like.

Three months had glided pleasantly away, and I was more than acclimatized in these northern regions, when the event occurred which so deeply impressed itself upon my boyish imagination. It was towards the close of October, and after an un-

usually warm and brilliant summer, the weather was beginning to show symptoms of a boisterous change. Some kind of feast was on the eve of celebration at the old farmhouse, but up to six o'clock the night before nothing had been seen or heard of Will; and as the occasion was an annual one, his absence was a matter of surprise. I happened from some reason or other to be out a little late, and consequently entered after the household had retired to rest. When I say late, it must be understood that I mean relatively late; for in this primitive district, the clock was always kept from an hour and a half to three hours in advance of the sun, so that (as people do with Old Lady-day and New Lady-day) it was our wont to say, when asked, "It is four o'clock," and if severely pressed, add, "It is two o'clock by the day." But this admission was rarely required, for railways were there unknown, and coaches and other vehicles for travelling regulated their departure strictly by the convenience of their passengers, and the exigencies of the weather. There was seldom any reference

made, except in the most casual way, to the rivalry between the day and the clock.* And thus it was that, though the hands of the latter pointed to nine o'clock on the night in question, half-past seven was undoubtedly nearer the real time.

Another custom illustrative of the prevalent simplicity of manners, was in usage here: *i. e.* to ignore the possible existence of burglars; and that in the most sincere and practical form. Horse and cattle stealers had indeed frequently left proof of their peculiar propensities, and farmers and shepherds had often waked in the morning to find the most choice of their flocks and herds “conspicuous by their absence,” to

* I can remember seeing a notice hung up in a very conspicuous situation in a certain roadside public-house, which was a perfect curiosity of calligraphy, orthography, and composition. I cannot remember the exact words, but the gist of it was, that provided a sufficient number of travellers came, and that one of them brought with him a stout horse or mare for the off-wheeler, and that the landlord was at liberty, and the road safe from storm, drift, or flood, the waggon would start from that house at three of the clock and five of the day. I have private reason to believe that the phrase alluding to the landlord being at liberty, really meant if he were not in jail, or “in trouble” as it is called; for he was a notorious horse-stealer.

borrow a favourite expression from the political slang of the day; but house-breaking—*that* was not regarded as possible. Therefore it was the habit at my kinsman's house, and at all these out-lying homesteads, neither to bar nor to bolt, but to leave the ground floor, kitchen, and offices under the sole protection of the sheep dogs, which are necessarily so numerous where the flocks are mostly pastured on moorland. Thus I had merely to insert my finger in the hole of the door to raise the latch, and walk in, and I was at once in the large low-roofed kitchen. The wood on the hearth had been freshly replenished, and a ruddy glare flashed out from time to time. Crouching on the hot stone in the front of the fire were some six or eight dogs in all, including a mother with two pups, three sheep or collie dogs, a greyhound, and another hound of a nondescript species.

But a human figure formed the centre of the group; and I was both startled and rejoiced, when my friend Will unrolled himself and offered me the best welcome he knew how to bestow: he first stirred his beloved fire into fresh and more vigor-

ous life, until with flame and shadow we resembled those strange beings, who, in form part human, part demon, and part animal, were wont to hold dreadful orgies, to the terror and prejudice of mankind. Then he pushed his half emptied porringer of milk towards me, and proceeded to clear a space for my person ; imagining probably that, to pass the night thus surrounded, caressed, and pillow'd by these four-footed gentlemen on the hot stone, exposed to the direct influence of the fire, was a mode offering many more advantages as respected comfort and warmth, than retirement to a hard little pallet beneath a thatched roof, not too impervious to the cold. I conceived the suggestion to be worthy of my acceptance, and prepared to spend there the remainder of the night.

It was several hours before we slept, for I found the poor natural in a more talkative vein than usual. After confiding to me some secrets in natural history having reference to the sure haunts of certain fish, known, as he believed, only to himself, he diverged on to other

things, and disclosed his ideas, vague and fragmentary as they were, of religion, and the nature of the mystery of death. I could not discover that he had advanced further than the belief or knowledge of the existence of a loving God and of a state of happiness beyond the grave; and I recollect that at the time, boy as I was, I experienced a friendly joy to think that of the more difficult and terrible doctrine of the possible misery of a life after death, he had either accidentally or by design been left in ignorance. Perhaps with his very poverty of intellect there was given to him a gracious immunity from fear, so that he regarded death neither with a base terror like some, nor with a sad perplexity like others. Of heaven (which, by the way, he did not call by that name, but referred to it as *home*) he thought as a Hyperborean country where cold and hunger, toil and pain, should have no place. He also spoke of it as a place of perpetual light; which I at first interpreted to mean, actual visible light, but afterwards understood to signify, however

dimly, enlightenment in the truest sense of that word. And this, I concluded from the frequent recurrence of one phrase which particularly struck me: he repeated it many times with great energy as he sat rubbing his long skinny hands together over the fire. “I am a poor natural, but when I go *home*, master Paul, when the night comes for me to go *home*, then I shall know: I shall know as others do.” To me this expression when taken in connection with the circumstances which occurred so quickly afterwards, seemed a prefiguration of the better land, like the early morning light sleeping on the dark still waters of the mountain tarn,* to be changed with the coming sun into the glorious effulgence and life of open day. It is possible that some of the itinerant preachers of the sect of Methodists, who occasionally travelled in these dales, may have furnished Will with the idea,

* I use the word *tarn* intentionally, as representing that which is fed by the infinitesimal tricklings from surrounding heights, as distinguished from a lake, which has a distinct source and outlet: this difference gives a greater fitness in the comparison.

and partly with the phraseology; but such a solution did not present itself to me then, and I listened with a feeling approaching awe to what sounded almost like the very words of the Apostle thus unexpectedly reproduced from the lips of a poor natural.

So did the night wear away, and the break of day found Will and me crouched lovingly among the dogs, in that spirit of liberty, fraternity and equality, with members of the animal kingdom so possible, and also delightful in early boyhood. During the forenoon, Willie was employed, as usual, in turning the roasting meat, and assiduously supplying fuel to the fire: this occupation was by no means incompatible with the exercise of his musical talents, and the intermittent din of the Jew's-harp informed the household in a sufficiently intelligible manner of the arrival of the expected guest. About four in the afternoon a little lad of eight or nine years old made his way into the farmyard, where he paused, perplexed and fearful at the chorus of barking and yelping which arose on

his appearance; until Will, who was notoriously tender-hearted, shambled out and led him in triumphantly.

The little fellow had, it appeared, been hired as shepherd's lad to a farmer living in a place about six miles distant over the range of hills, and in the next dale; and was in some distress of mind, under the impression that, having lost his way, he should be unable to reach his destination at the proper time. He was either a very timid, or a very conscientious child, for this idea had brought him to tears, which had marked little furrows down his rosy, dirty cheeks, only partially removed by the constant application of his knuckles and jacket-sleeve. Food was quickly placed before him, the women administered consolation after the fashion natural to them, and Will generously offered, notwithstanding the coming festivity, to pilot him over the moor, intending to return to share, at least, in the close of the evening's entertainment.

This commenced at five o'clock, by the appearance of enormous preparations for eating and

drinking, which were noisily welcomed by some dozen of men, lads, and red-armed farm girls. At six, or rather before, Will, who had been trying in a retired corner to alleviate the grief of his little friend by buzzing away at his Jew's-harp, intimated that it was high time to set out, and taking the little lad by the hand, he commenced his journey. I accompanied them for a few hundred yards, and when I parted from them, I bade Will to make speed and return quickly.

“Yes, Master Paul,” he replied; “ye will see me sune again, and thank ye kindly.”

So I did indeed, poor fellow; though I little thought how and when I should see him next.

The road lay across several fields, and after repeated turns it entered on the open moorland, which here took the form of an extensive defile, belted on the south by low land, and flanked on the north by a steep and rugged chain of hills. After proceeding directly westward for some two miles, the road, or rather track, wound to the right, following the bend of the chain, at a point the exact line of which was indicated,

on one side by a stone quarry, on the other by an old lime-kiln — marks eligible enough in summer, but liable to be rendered dangerous by accidental circumstances—such as mountain mists, snow-storms, &c. A tolerably steep ascent was necessary at this corner; and that accomplished, the traveller to Hinistonbeck (the farm in question) would need to retrace the direction of his steps on the further side of the hill. A route shorter by more than a mile there was, leading completely over the loftiest part of the plateau; it was a mere sheep track, very imperfectly marked, but in common use among the shepherds, and safe enough under ordinary conditions, and for a man who was accustomed to the country. When I quitted Will, the sun was setting like a dull red ball in a mass of murky clouds, and already a thick white vapour was beginning to curl up from the corners of the plantations and fields, as if in rivalry of the fog-capped hills which faced them.

While song and cup went round, the evening wore away; and there was no lack of dancing, of

that homely and vigorous sort in which the dalesmen are proficient. I slipped off several times to the farmyard, but seeing nothing of Will, I conjectured that he had accompanied the lad beyond where it was originally intended, and had judged it wiser to stay all night at Hinistonbeck than to attempt to recross the moor so late in the evening; the more so as for an hour past the wind had, from a moaning at first gentle and then sullen, risen to shrill and loud blasts, which, ominously audible as they sounded to my ears, were entirely unheard within the walls, owing to the joyous uproar of the guests. Those who noticed Will's prolonged absence solved the problem in the same manner; but I continued to regret that my friend did not return: partly from a boyish sentiment, that it was a pity under any circumstances to miss a merrymaking, and partly from a vague apprehension natural to a town lad not thoroughly inured to the solitude of these dales; for I had listened with greedy attention and believing mind to many a hundred tales of local superstition and horror, and to unnumbered rela-

tions of the disasters encountered by travellers, by moor, morass, river, ford and fell, and in my secret heart I thought a lonely walk at night across the hills was tempting Providence.

About ten the last rousing song was sung, the last huge bowl of hot spiced ale had passed round, the farewell word was said, and for the last time, oppressed with a heavy foreboding which I could not shake off, and for which I was unable to give any reason, I sallied forth to examine the signs of the night, and draw comfort from them, if any comfort there was to be drawn. Four or five there were among the men whose homes lay elsewhere ; one of them, mounted on a stout pony, briefly admonished me in passing,—

“ You’ll be best in doors, young’un ; it’s going to be a foul night.”

I was on the point of asking him to look out for poor Will, but refrained, as I saw him turn the animal’s head in the opposite direction ; but another horseman I addressed thus,—

“ Please, farmer, will you look out for poor Will and the little lad ? ”

I suppose something in my tone struck him as being unsuitable to a festive meeting, for he replied,—

“ And wha’s to mell wi’ Will? what flites thee, lad? Gang thy weas yam wi’ thy lang feace, and doant hang thysen on t’ rooad it yat;” and with this specimen of north country wit he left me.

I indemnified myself for what I considered an unpardonable want of courtesy by disobeying his direction, and referring his ill-manners to the over potency of the ale.

The night continued to grow more stormy, and the elements combined in such order, as to array it with unspeakable fascinations for me. A series of strong gusts from the north sweeping over the hills had cleft the fog, as it were, in twain, and these being in their turn met by opposing currents, the fierce raging of the battle of the winds had the effect of scattering profusely over the far range of moor and dale, illumined as it was by a gleam of moonlight from time to time, shadowy columns, falling balls of vapour and

floating islands of discomfited mist. Gradually these fantastic outlines seemed to take definite human, or rather demoniac forms. At one moment they were the flying columns of an airy host, at another, the departing vision of a crowd of winged angels. They swayed to and fro as they were driven by the wind, or, as I was inclined to think, by the ghosts of the night, sometimes clinging to the black, leafless branches of the trees, snatched up to the sky, or riven to shreds, and laid in shapeless fragments on the earth.

It has been well said that all solitudes are generally fear-haunted and fear-peopled. To my excited imagination, the moans and shrieks of the wind, as it strained and bent the trees, and swept over the moor, were the frantic cries of human despair, or the loud, defiant warning of evil spirits; what I beheld became for me in effect a dismal pageant of phantoms.

I waited in the hopes that some of the others might be going in the direction of Hinistonbeck, but it was in vain; and it was not until the

echo of the last step had died away, that I reluctantly turned to go in-doors.

I went up-stairs to my bed, and notwithstanding my anxiety, fell into a sound sleep, from which I was, however, aroused a little after midnight by the barking of dogs and the trampling of heavy feet. I got up to ascertain the cause, and found that snow was falling so heavily as to make it necessary for the shepherds to go out with their dogs in order to look after the sheep on the moor. I lay down again, but my sleep was so broken and filled with disturbing dreams, that at four I rose and dressed, though it wanted nearly two hours to daybreak. The wind had fallen, the storm was over, the snow had quite ceased, having covered the ground to the extent of a couple of inches thick, and the moon was riding high in the heavens, shedding a brilliant light on the white-clad world below.

Not half-an-hour had elapsed before a young farmer rode into the yard, mounted on a powerful rough-coated horse, which had, to all appearance, been ridden very fast. The household was,

of course, afoot; but it so happened that I was the first to encounter him, and, young as I was, I could not help observing the chalky whiteness of his face.

“Have you gotten Waffling Will here?” were the first words he uttered.

I responded in the negative, adding that Will and a little lad had set off the night before for Hinistonbeck. The anxious expression of his face changed to one of absolute dismay.

“Then that will be the last thou’llt hear of him, for I’ve seen his fetch this night, lad,” was his reply as he dismounted.*

The man instantly became the centre of a crowd of eager listeners, to whom the tidings were quickly communicated.

“Happen it wur Willie hissen?” remarked one.

“Dost thou think I doan’t know a man’s feace

* A Fetch is supposed to be the disembodied soul which is released either at the time or immediately after death, for the purpose of appearing to others to warn them of the event. It is, I believe, synonymous with “Wraith.” I once had a patient who for seventeen years laboured under the delusion that he was haunted with his own fetch.

fra a man's fetch?" And this objector was silenced.

"Hoo dost thou knew it wur Willie's fetch; it might ha' been thine own?"

"Wouldst thou knew my feace frae thine if thou saw it, lad? As sure as Will wur alive and is deead, have I seen his fetch this night," was the response.

"And what's gotten the young lad, meas-
ter?"

"There wur a bairn, or what looked like a bairn, hauding on t'iv him; but the mare snorted an' shifted, sae it wur all I could dee to get her by the heead, and I warrant I didn't look fræ between her ears over mony times: and noo, lads, for ony sake give me some whisky."

My cousin now entered the kitchen, and seem-
ingly much impressed, asked for further particu-
lars. It would be tedious to repeat the man's
account, delivered, as it was, in the peculiar dialect
of the dalesmen. The substance was briefly this:
after rounding the hill from over the dale, he
had hardly entered the defile before his horse

evinced symptoms of terror and uneasiness. He contended with her for some time, but at last she came to a full halt, planted her fore legs, and refused to move, breaking out at the same time into a profuse sweat. The moon was shining brightly, and he could see nothing before him to account for the behaviour of the animal; he plied whip and spur in vain, and then paused, intending to dismount, when he heard, as he declared, a queer kind of moan, repeated two or three times, in a sad and plaintive tone, apparently proceeding from some one just behind him. He turned hastily round, but seeing nothing, dismounted, and then observed, for the first time, that besides his own shadow there was *another*, or rather *two*, cast on the snow by the moonlight. One was that of a man, tall, thin, and dressed in a loose, round jacket similar to what Will always wore; the other was that of a child clinging to him, or holding his hand. On beholding this, the young farmer sprang on to his horse, which now showed every disposition to run away, and they proceeded along the defile at a furious

gallop. As often as he glanced round he saw these shadows, sometimes the size of life, and close to him, or alongside of him, sometimes of such gigantic proportions that the outlines of the figures were thrown against the hills in vivid relief; but, far off or near, they were always neck and neck with his horse. Speed did not avail him; the spectre forms advanced as he advanced, and flitted over the ground and along the hills with the noiseless rapidity of a flying cloud. From first to last the man never seemed to have entertained any other idea than that the apparition, having the form and semblance of poor Will, was the unearthly thing which they all knew and believed in, under the name of a fetch; and unable any longer to sustain his courage, he set spurs to his horse, shut his eyes, and never drew rein until horse and rider were in the farmyard.

I had listened to this recital with the deepest attention, and it struck me that one vein of consolation had been explored, into which I might sink a shaft. I therefore demanded, not without timidity,—

“ Supposing Will and the lad are at Hinistonbeck all this time safe and sound ? ”

“ I slept at Hinistonbeck last night, lad, and not an inch nor a foot have I gone frae ‘t path sin I and t’ mare set out.”

The solemn sternness with which this speech was delivered made my heart, already sinking, die within me; and I no longer dared to oppose the general verdict. The belief at once took root in my mind (and became from after circumstances almost indestructible) that this phantom, ghost, haunting spirit, wraith, whatever name might be assigned to it, which had so scared the stout dalesman, was beyond any doubt the soul, released and disembodied, of my poor friend Will. My only wonder was, that it had appeared to *him* rather than to me, and I lost no time in secretly arranging what my own line of conduct should be, supposing that I should also behold it.*

* I am inclined to regard this remarkable case, as one of *pure* hallucination, and not of optical delusion. It may be accounted for, by referring it to the laws which govern the existence of hallucinations, whereas it seems to me incapable of solution by the ordinary laws of optical delusions, such,

No more was said on the subject, but each individual commenced making preparations on his own account; and a little after sunrise, men, horses, and dogs issued forth on the strange expedition, as to the expected result of which, though we had not put it into so many words, not one among us entertained any doubt. I need hardly

for instance, as the spectres seen in the mountainous districts of Scotland and Germany, of which the well-known spectre of the Brocken furnishes an example. Mr. Haue was the first who accounted for the Brocken Spectre. (Vide *Philosophical Magazine*, vol. i.) These appearances are explained by Sir D. Brewster in his natural history of magic. They are seen, he says, only by the concurrence of three conditions. First, the sun must be near to the horizon; second, the spectator must have his back to the sun; third, the air must contain some vapour *partially* distributed. The spectre then appears alone, or in company, corresponding in number to those who witness it, and mimicking their gestures and motions so perfectly as to establish the conviction that the phantom is but a dilated reflection of the spectator. Now of these conditions, the first and second were obviously wanting. The sun was not near the horizon; there was not even that opal-coloured atmosphere which suggests the dawn; on the contrary, the moon was high in the sky; and with respect to the last particular, in no sort of way was it realized according to the account given. The man persisted in declaring that there were *two* figures, a tall thin man on foot, and clinging to him a childish form, both of colossal size certainly, but in no respect simulating the appearance or movement of a horse and its rider.

say I took care not to be left behind. The snow, though not many inches thick, considerably baffled the efforts of the dogs by destroying the scent; still beneath the trees, where little or none had fallen, we traced the footprints of Will and his little companion very successfully, until we turned on to the open moor, where our task became of necessity one of greater difficulty. By sweeping the snow away from time to time, however, we made out the marks sufficiently often for our purpose; but came to a check when we arrived at the foot of the short but dangerous path which led directly over the mountain, and which I have before described. Apparently the mist must have embarrassed Will, for there were many marks, and in different directions, as if to indicate that there had been perplexity, and much walking to and fro. Finally, he must have taken the upward path, which we accordingly followed; but at the summit we lost the track altogether; and for two hours searched perseveringly, but in vain. At last a shout from below proclaimed that one of

the party had again struck on the scent. This time it lay in a slanting line down into the defile on the same side by which we had ascended, and about a mile and a half from the starting point. At this period it was observed that the frequency of the footprints indicated how much shorter the steps had been made, as if fatigue had begun to make itself painfully felt. We proceeded onwards for nearly half a mile, until we had rounded the corner; and here we were once more at fault. The dogs began to sniff and whine, and then ran round and round in a circle, which they continued to make wider and wider. The men looked at each other, and my heart beat thick and fast, as the conviction dawned slowly on my mind that our task was nearly over. At this instant an old and very sagacious hound uttered a sharp, short bark, left the others, and, striking off the direct path, ran towards an old lime-kiln, about three hundred yards distant. Still we did not move.

“There be the auld lime-kiln,” said one man, reluctantly. “Willie was main fond of a fire.”

Then we began to follow the dog, some of us running, some dragging behind like men about to behold something sad and awful. A prolonged shrill howl from the old dog told us, without any need of human words, what that was to be.

The lime in the kiln was no longer burning; but within the enclosure, lying close to the lime heap, were poor Will and the child, with closed eyes, and waxen-hued features already set in death. Their limbs were even then rigid, and there is every reason to believe that life must have been extinct for many hours; probably since before midnight, for a thin layer of snow remained undisturbed and unthawed on Will's face and dress: and it may be recorded as a last trait of his simple kind-heartedness, that he had taken off his old jacket, and had evidently spent some little time in trying to arrange it, so as to procure a slight additional warmth for the little boy. They had most likely been in the first outset thoroughly bewildered by the mist; and then retracing (often more than once)

their own steps, moving, as it were, in a circle, until becoming spent, wearied, and hopeless, they had doubtless crept into the lime-kiln for rest and shelter. Will was perhaps attracted by the light; and, knowing no cause for fear, and always peculiarly dim-sighted to calamity, he had persuaded the child without difficulty to accompany him. And for the last time they lay down, never more to wake in this world.

“Poor Will! he be froze dead,” said one.

“He ben’t froze: the lime it wur that killed him,” replied another.

“No man nor bairn can sleep in a lime-kiln and live,” said an old shepherd, decisively.

“And where be them as said I was mistaan i’ what I saw?” exclaimed the young farmer who had seen the apparition. “Where be them that said it wur not *his* fetch as I seed? You waan’t mock at my story again, some o’ these lang winter nights, I reckon.”

“Nay, man,” my kinsman interposed, “we didn’t mock at thy tale, we did but want to think it wur ower bad to be true. Poor Will’s

dead. God be merciful to him! Has the bairn a mother, and which of ye will let her have word of what's come on the lad?"

There was a silence, and something was muttered about the minister; for from such a task these men, rough as they were, recoiled. A few minutes afterwards the sorrowful little procession bearing the two bodies wended their way up the defile to the house.

I have supposed thus far that Will had been ignorant of the danger of his position and of the certainty that to sleep would be to die, either from cold and exposure, or from his proximity to the burning lime and the noxious gas that substance always evolves. On the other hand, it seems to me quite possible that he had lain down, because he was utterly unable from exhaustion to proceed further, and that he well knew that in so doing he accepted death.

"When I go home, when the night comes for me to go home, *then* I shall know as others do."

Had these words no significance? When I

remember them, it is difficult to suppose that poor Will had not experienced some vague and dim foreshadowing of the truth as he uttered them. People in robust health may, and commonly do, fear death so much, that they little imagine how sometimes this sentiment fades into nothingness. Desire fails “when man goeth to his long home.”

My own experience inclines me to believe that in all cases of lingering illness, however fatal in their nature, and to whatever extent the knowledge of the certainty of fatal issue has been acquired by the patient, there is hardly ever either fear or regret when the last moment draws near. As vitality dies out, there is a corresponding decay in the active desire for life, and the prospect of a release earns almost a welcome for death. I have observed this repeatedly, in instances where, as far as man might presume to judge, there was no obvious ground for consolation as respected the past life, nor comfort to be derived from any apparently adequate sense of repentance for the present.

It is the strong man who, in the prime of life, from some accident or fatality, learns suddenly that three or four hours are all that he has in this world : it is from him we may expect to see a frenzied mutiny or a mortal anguish. But even then, I have also witnessed (at least as often as the much-talked-of lightening before death) before the actual change, that passionate and too human regret replaced by a profound and (but that the expression has been so misused, I would say,) angelic calm ; and this also irrespective of any human reasons why it should be thus changed.

One feature, which in such a death as poor Will's often forms the especial and crowning bitterness, was in his case wanting. No home claimed him—no kindred depended on him—neither mother, wife, nor child were watching in vain for him on that or any other night. The anguished expectation, the deferred hope, which is united by so fine a link to despair, had no existence for him. With little to repent of or sorrow for, having nothing to conceal or which he would have been glad to forget, but

sleeping in present irreflective rest from his toil, poor Will passed away into the final repose of death.*

* In that short period of benumbed consciousness and apparent sleep which immediately precedes death, whether by cold, exhaustion, drowning, or other causes, there is, I have reason to believe, often a dream, or delirium of happiness. The case of a friend of mine who was lost in a snow-drift on the mountains, and was rescued from death when in the last stage of unconsciousness, appears to me of sufficient interest to be mentioned here. He had probably sailed as near to the shores of the silent land, as it was ever permitted to mortal bark to do and return. In compliance with my request, he gave me written details. Speaking of the moment when the awful certainty broke irresistibly on his mind, that no other destiny lay before him than to die there—swiftly, unaided, and alone, he says, “The sound of little feet in welcome, the infant caresses of tiny fingers, the yearning eyes and faithful heart of — these were the thoughts that made that solitary death terrible; then came a few minutes of fervid, fruitless activity, of hurried pacing to and fro on that narrow plateau; of wringing of hands—of wild rebellion, and passionate regrets, and then—calm. I had exhausted alike my resources of knowledge and strength, and lay down in the full assurance that I should never again see the morning’s dawn. I suppose that I must have passed into the half sleep which precedes death; yet, influenced by the ‘wonderful chemistry of dreams,’ I was deliriously happy. I was floating down a mighty stream, where strangely enough, all my sensations were of light and warmth. I was a silent spectator of dim and vast processions, out of which millions of human faces regarded me, but all with kind and friendly expression. I was in tropical latitudes, surrounded by magnificent flowers, brilliant birds,

snakes, tigers, and yet the atmosphere was distinctly felt to be one of undeniable pleasure and safety. I passed, as it seemed to me, an eternity of time thus ; but I supposed from what I afterwards learned, that it could not have been more than an hour or two ; and when I regained consciousness I was in bed at ——” I am inclined to think that the actual space of time of this cerebral exaltation, was far less than my friend indicates—probably ten minutes was the utmost ; and I imagine it to have been a far less interval. I remember a similar account which was once given me by a young woman who had attempted to commit suicide, by inhaling the fumes of charcoal, and had nearly succeeded. Her experience was somewhat analogous ; but owing, perhaps, to the difference in her previous state (one of extreme mental misery), *her* dying dream of happiness was of the most profound rest, and the continuous sound of faint and solemn music.

Jean o' the Isles.

“Every perturbation is a misery, but grief is a cruel torment.”

TULLY, iii. *Tusc.*

“YE are out late on the hills the night, Jean. Why are ye no at hame? It's a wild night.”

“A wild night ye ca' it? Ou aye, it's a bonnie night, wi' the wind whirling and screaming round ane. As I crossed the brig a while syne, it soopit under it in a fearsome way.”

“But it's ower late for ye, Jean. Ye'll be happening some harm.”

“Naebody wad harm me, for I'm Jean o' the Isles, and I'm mad, ye ken,” and a cunning smile stole over the worn features of the woman. “Lady Jean o' the Isles—o' the Isles, ye mind,” she added, with a little pride in her manner.

“Come hame wi' me, then,” returned the girl

laying her hand coaxingly on Jean's shoulder, "and sup brose wi' us. Father and mither wad be blithe to see ye."

"I canna do that, Miss Annie," said Jean; "there's mair wi' me than such as ye are ken o'. I maun be doon i' the craigie by this. He suld want me. Him ye ken of wants me sair and syne. Do ye no hear ca', mither, mither." Jean here placed her hand to her ear, and leaned forward in a listening and anxious attitude. The girl, too, stood motionless, but more to humour Jean, than in any secret fear, for her brow was frank and fearless, and her eye bright and steady. Jean resumed with a rather troubled and disappointed air: "The water drip, drip, drips, sae, I can hear naught. Come wi' me, Miss Annie, I hae business for ye." She kept a tenacious hold of the girl's hand, and tried to lead her forward. "It was *your* hair was sae gowden, and *your* e'en that were sae blue, that they made his heart sair to see them. And they make my e'en water as I look at them, Miss Annie," and she drew her hand once or twice across her eyes.

“No, no,” the girl replied hurriedly, as if this strain of the mad woman’s reminiscences had in it something of a disturbing nature. “No, no, Jean, I winna come to-night; my father wad be fashed.”

“And ye’ll no come, Miss Annie Cameron,” returned Jean, peering wistfully into the girl’s face, and laying rather spiteful emphasis on the lengthy title. Then she sprang off, singing,—“Hech he lies doon, doon i’ the craigie hole, doon i’ the burnie, and the green rushes grow aboon him, and the quiet waters— Oh, Miss Annie,” she continued, snatching at both the girl’s hands, “ye maun come, ye maun come! Mind my words, syne or late, it must be sae. And there’s great scant o’ water.”

Annie released herself hastily, but kindly,
“Puir Jean! gude night, Jean; I’m wae for ye always. Gang to your sister, at your ain hame, Jean. Gude night.”

The mad woman stood looking vacantly for a few instants after Annie’s receding figure, as with a blithe and stately step she walked rapidly

on. To the left rose steep and high hills of stately stones, with here and there a patch of long heather and tall foxglove. To the right was some sedgy ground; then came an abrupt fall, and from the gurgling, monotonous noise audible, it was evident that a mountain stream held its course below.

Annie Cameron descended swiftly into a gentle hollow, crossed a slender footbridge, then came to a copse of stunted birch and alder-trees, where the silvery bark was nearly concealed by the pale green moss which hung festooned upon the branches. And here Annie took advantage of the seat afforded by the trunk of a prostrate tree to take off her laced shoe, and rectify something or other in its internal arrangements, which had been inconvenient enough to challenge attention.

It was very moist ground, and amongst a group of undersized trees or shrubs standing close to her, the perpetually quivering leaf of the aspen tree caught her eye. She leaned forward, and looked earnestly at it. She pulled a leaf and laid it on her hand; as she did so, it quivered

still, probably by the action of her breath. Annie dropped it hastily.

“I wonder,” she said, half aloud, “why the aspen leaves never, never rest? I mind what auld Elspeth told me was the reason they shook, like men in fear or fever: but she was an auld Papist,” continued Annie, more courageously; “and father said it was all a tale o’ papistrie.* But I’m like Jean, I’m talking to myself.” And she rose to pursue her way.

From the little wood, Annie emerged into a lovely glade of fine soft herbage, bordered with trees of a larger kind, such as oak, and beech, but all having a dried and shrivelled aspect; here, fairy rings and a variety of many-coloured fungi lay around on the stained damp ground. Annie Cameron was not a Catholic maiden, but she had her little superstitions, and exhibited the greatest carefulness to avoid placing her feet on

* Referring probably to the popular legend, which declares that it was from the wood of the aspen-tree (or trembling poplar) that the cross was made on which Christ was crucified, and therefore from that moment the leaves of the aspen-tree have never ceased to tremble and quiver.

these magic rings. And now she was on the moor hills, again following the sheep track, which was here her sole guide. As if a thought had suddenly struck her, she turned round and looked intently back. Her eye ran along the course of the burn, until it rested on a high, dark prominence with a very steep fall on the left side. There was against the sky the dim outline of a human being tossing its arms and running to and fro. The girl seemed half undecided. She glanced upwards; the gray clouds were drifting fast over the sky, and evening was rapidly closing in.

“ The creature’s glowering over that craigie rock, again,” she muttered; “ it’s an awful sight! She’s *sae* fond of the place, *syne* Jamie was found there. I’ll ask father what turned her mind *sae* wild, for he *ance* said he kenned, and that he minded when she was the bonniest girl *i’ the village.*” She came by the burnside once more here, and turning suddenly round a corner was at once in a spot of great natural beauty. A low, thatched, rambling little homestead lay

in a sort of hollow ; and the light in the window and the strong smell of turf burning gave forth clear indications of the warmth and comfort that were to be found within.

At the sight of home, the girl sprang forward, and in another minute she was in the house. A large peat fire blazed upon the hearth. One or two bare-legged, high-cheek-boned lads, were clustered round, with torn books or half-pages in their hands, conning busily, and accepting with wary discretion the dogmas therein inculcated. A delicate-looking woman, with a sweet and comely countenance, welcomed her with “ The laddies have been wearying for you, Annie ; they wanted you to read them their bit lessons.”

The girl removed her bonnet, and a quantity of sunny yellow hair fell in thick masses on her neck. A pair of calm, trustful, soft gray eyes were quite in unison with a very lovely and pure-looking young face. One would almost be inclined to say that such features bore plain tokens of descent from Puritan fathers and fore-fathers.

At that moment other sounds were heard, and the wife's eye brightened as her husband's footstep crossed the threshold. The door opened, and the gudeman entered with his plaid round him, and his dog at his heels. He was a tall man, and might be perhaps a score of years older than his wife; but though time had sown his dark hair thickly with white, it had been powerless to bend his wiry athletic frame. As he unbonneted, in spite of the shaggy brows which projected like a pent-house over his keen bright eyes, and the rigid square setting of the jaw, his face bore a visible though rugged resemblance to his daughter's. This was old David Cameron. For nearly three hundred years his family had occupied that land: there they had lived and toiled, and died, and had gone to dust in the same kirkyard. He was a genuine descendant of his old Covenant ancestors — of the men who had struggled, and bled, and perished, for their stern quaint creed: given for it their heart's blood, and their soul's travail — of the women, who had quietly suffered martyrdom

and had died gladly. Their faith has been called, and perhaps truly, one of gloom ; but it supported them triumphantly when death stood at their right hand, and hardly any creed can do more.

Annie took her father's bonnet and plaid, and set for him a roughly carved wooden chair ; performing all these trifling services lightly and blithely, and yet with a reverent grace which became her well. The supper was placed on the table, and the young ones gathered round. It was not long before mother Eve prompted Annie, and she bethought her of Jean, and of the resolution she had made to obtain a true history of the poor creature's misfortune.

“ I have been by Strather glen, father ; and as I came round by the burnie stanes, who suld I meet, but puir Jean o' the Isles, as she ca's herself. Was she always sae miserable in her mind, and sae sadly demented, father ? ”

“ Nae, Annie, it's a sad tale of wrong wrought by man, and suffered by woman. I'm an auld man now ; but it seems like yesterday that I remember Jean the fairest and merriest girl in

the country side. She had dark blue e'en and a sort of chesnut-coloured hair."

"She has them still, David," said Mrs. Cameron.

"Ay, wife, but her e'en are dry and wild, and her hair is tint wi' gray, and her face is strewn and scared wi' sorrow. She was a slender bit of a lassie then. Angus M'Kenzie it was who played false to that poor girl; and the wee bairn which she bore into the world had a graceless father, and an unwed mother, who with such shame and grief on her, could hardly lift her stricken head. Then it pleased the Almighty to lay his hand heavily on her, and her mind was distraught with strange fancies."

"Day by day, come fair or rain, David, have I seen her biding at the kirk door, waiting, as she said, for Angus M'Kenzie to keep word with her."

"He was truly a godless, graceless man," said old David sternly. "He never came; and soon he left these parts entirely, where indeed he was ill looked upon by all. Do you mind her boy Jamie?"

"Yes," replied his wife, "he was a fine bold

boy ; and oh, how his poor mither's heart was wrapped up in him ! She used to greet, though, often ; but the doctor said that was a gude sign : indeed her raving fits came not so often, and were not so fearsome to behold. In the cauldest winter blast when the snaw was driving, or in summer when the thunder and lightning were heavy on the hills, she wad be the night long on the muir among the heather, skirling over the linns and fens. They said a full moon or a wild wind made her sae, she could na bide in doors. It's a marvel, however, that bairn lived through it all. But she lo'ed the wean weel, and considering she was out of her mind, did just wonderfully by him."

" She did, wife ; but she changed much to the eye. Frae all this it came that the white, slim girl grew into a meagre, gaunt, weather-worn woman, fleet o' foot, and wi' muscles strung and knotted like the tawse. The puir bairn had black e'en, and a proud gay look like his father ; but he was wilful, and had he lived I doubt that he would have been any comfort for

his mother's desolation. You can all remember, bairns, when the unfortunate laddie was found drowned in the deep hole that lies under the Black craigie. How it chanced, none can tell. He was near sixteen years auld then, and suld hae been weel able to take care of himself. One doctor hoped that the shock of seeing the body taken from the waters, wi' the white face and lang dripping black hair, wad be of service to her mind ; but I judge that was not sae. She did na greet either."

"Did she no greet, father ?" demanded Annie.
"Surely that was strange!"

"There are griefs sae sair, my bairn," replied her mother, "that the heart weeps over them, but not the e'en."

"It may be sae," David continued. "It is certain that frae that day to this, she's always hanging ower the craigie rock, or flitting about below and peering into the waters ; and a dangerous strange look comes on her at times."

"Do you no think medicine would heal her ?" asked Annie.

“The hand of the Lord is on her,” answered her father solemnly, “and He who has laid the burden will remove it when He sees fit to do so!”

The remnants of the meal were laid aside; the usual simple prayer offered up, and soon all beneath that roof slept in peace.

* * * * *

The cold wan light which betokens the break of day, appeared over the hills as a female attired in a somewhat patch costume walked quickly along the sheep track. Presently she quitted it; but, hill or plain, moor or swamp, rough or smooth, she never relaxed her pace. She crossed a bog, and splashed in unflinchingly ankle deep; then out again, crossed a mountain ravine, leaping from point to point as she did so with the activity of a goat. At last, she approached a group of cottages; she passed them by, and then reached two straggling hovels at the far end of the village. She stopped at the door of one of these, put her finger through a hole in it, and unfastened the inner latch. It opened into a narrow passage, having a door to the left, and

terminating in some rough and steep ladder-like steps, which served for stairs. A voice was heard from above: “Hech, Jeannie, where hae ye been, woman? Ye suld keep better hours,” and a hard, anxious though kindly face appeared at the head of the stairs.

“Dinna harry me, Maggie, wi’ your daffing: I’m sair weary, and I’ll just gang to my bed.” She turned into the room, which presented a fair picture of the general interior of the houses occupied by the more indigent of the peasants. The walls were painted some dark colour, where dirt might and did rest unobtrusively and unchallenged; the brick floor was some inches thick, with a similar accumulation of material; the ceiling was black with peat smoke, and the air of the chamber was close and unwholesome. Some peacocks’ feathers and dried ferns and grasses were fantastically arranged against the wall, and a three-cornered cupboard that had once possessed a glass front contained some grotesque specimens of pottery. Jean took off the garment that did duty for a gown, and then the poor creature

knelt down before the glimmering spark that lingered on the hearth, and chafed her hands; talking to herself as she peered wistfully around her. Her scanty clothing revealed a dreadfully emaciated and skeleton-like figure; and hanging from a bit of string round her neck was suspended a half sixpence which lay on her withered breast: probably a love token delivered to her in happier days. In a few minutes she was in her bed, but not to sleep apparently; for she almost immediately leaned out, and proceeded at first calmly, and with some little stateliness of manner, to address a spectre audience.*

* Besides the fixed delusion concerning her son, of which more will be said anon, Jean was then, and must have been for long, largely subject to hallucinations, both of sight and hearing. It would be tedious to recapitulate the various definitions which different writers have given to this word, as distinguished from illusion. Some explanations are remarkable for their obscurity, others for their singularity. One of the shortest perhaps is that given by Dendy, in his *Philosophy of Mystery*. Hallucination is, he says, a past recollection; illusion, a present recollection. It will be sufficient to say here, that the great essential difference according to the writers who have written most clearly on the subject, is this:—

A Hallucination is a purely cerebral image, and has no existence either as an external or internal object. As where a patient sees or talks with an angel when he is alone.

An Illusion is where a real object appears differently to

" Hech, sirs, and ye are kind to come and see the puir body ; but ye maun keep your distance, what it is ; it has in fact a material object for foundation, as where a patient mistakes his keeper for the devil, or tastes poison in his food.

A Delusion is where a false perception is entertained which has no necessary reference to the senses, as where a patient believes his soul is lost, that he cannot die, &c.

Hallucinations in most cases appear suddenly, and rather at night than in the day. Out of 144 cases, M. B. de Boismont observes that,

In 62, hallucinations occurred at night.

" 50, " " during the day.
" 32, " " by day and night.

They affect one, two, or any number of the senses. Those of sight are the most common ; those of sight and hearing, like Jean's, the next so ; and those of hearing the third. M. B. de Boismont gives the following table of his observations on 177 cases of hallucination, taken both from sane and insane subjects :—

Hallucinations of sight	-	-	-	78
" hearing	-	-	-	16
" sight and hearing	-	-	-	46
" sight, hearing, and touch	-	-	-	4
" sight and touch	-	-	-	8
" sight, hearing, and smell	-	-	-	1
" sight, taste, and smell	-	-	-	1
" hearing and touch	-	-	-	2
" smell	-	-	-	3
" taste	-	-	-	2
" smell and taste	-	-	-	1
" touch	-	-	-	9
" all the senses	-	-	-	6

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Out of these 177 cases of hallucinations, 25 were combined with illusions.—*Vide M. BRIERRE DE BOISMONT on Hallucinations*, p. 424.

for I am, ye ken, to be treated with respect," and she waved her hand with a strange dignity. "The auld fule wives ca' me crazy Jean; but I'm no that: I'm just mair gleg than they who ca' me sae: mony a crooked skein hae I unravelled. But staun bock, beggars and gentlefolk all; I'm Lady Jean o' the Isles, ye ken, and I wad speak wi' ye anent my son, the King o' the Isles."

Then she began to sob and moan.

"But I'm whiles gran', and I'm whiles puir." And under the influence of this sudden breaking down of her hallucination, she wept bitterly and rocked herself to and fro.

Again her mood changed, and she demanded angrily:

"Gude woman, what gars ye peer ower the Black Pool sae?" responding, in another key, "I'm just seeking my puir son, laird, and I never had but one, and his name it was Jamie."

She resumed in a menacing tone:

"Hech, auld wife, dinna rive the lang weeds i' that gate! It's his black tup ye hold sae tight,

and it's his hair twining 'mang the burnie stanes."

Again she appeared to answer, and this time with a defiant melancholy.

“I’m no an auld wife, laird: gang your ways hame, laird, for I’m the mother that never was wed. But Jamie lo’ed sae weel the lass wi’ the gowden hair, and noo he lies sae gran’ and still.”

She sang, or rather chanted, some wild ditty, the words running thus:—“Green grow the rushes, oh, ower my ain dear lad, and the water-lily blaws, and the dead leaves twist aff the trees, and swirl ower his head.”

There was a long pause, and when she recommenced it was rapidly and with anger: a red flush stole over her face, and the veins swelled in her temples and neck.

“Black-eyed Angus, you’re a rare thief! ye took all frae me I had to give, and said ye wad make me your ain true wife, and lang, lang I bided at the kirk gate; but it’s many a day syne, and ye have no come. What, you here, Gowpie o’ Strathpen? and ye too, dame Elspie?” and she

pointed her skinny fingers derisively at the phantom crowd of her unwelcome visitors.

“Aye geck, and aye girn, ye auld randy wives, ye taupee ne’er-do-weels that ye are. Bide wi’ ye, ye tell me? I’ll bide nae wi’ ye,” and more than one imprecation mingled with her raving.

At length she leant back exhausted; her mutterings grew almost inaudible, her wanderings were gradually hushed, and soon the poor maniac sank into a heavy slumber.

* * * * *

High on the hillside the modest gray-stone building, common to all villages north of the Tweed, reared itself into sight, occupying, as it invariably does, the most bleak and exposed situation. The plantation of fir-trees which flanked it were all one-sided; showing, by the bare, leafless aspect which they presented, that north-east winds, in their pitiless stormy blasts, affect even Scotch fir-trees. Patches of corn and potatoes were close round the garden, but did not, by any over luxuriance, accuse the minister of too high farming. Facing the house

the ground broke away abruptly. At the foot of the hill was a little thicket of birch and hazel trees. You could not see the silver-trout stream which they sheltered, but you might hear plainly its low-toned song. Beyond this, rising up directly opposite, lay the vast range of the — hills; those that were near looking rugged, and full of dark chasms, while the far-off ones were softened and rounded by distance, and tinted with purple by the mist. The house was, as my readers will surmise, the manse. No beggar ever went thence quite unrelieved, no heart was turned away quite uncomforted; perhaps I might add that no impostor was ever there subjected to a too rigid scrutiny, for the minister's wife, who was compelled; for reasons of state, to profess a certain austerity of principle, did notoriously combine therewith both faith and charity in practice.

Now Mrs. Hume was not the slight-built angel which forms the wife of our dreams when we are two-and-twenty, but she was precisely the kind of home-star of which any man over five-

and-thirty would excusably envy the lawful possessor. The hair, which it must be owned inclined in hue rather to red than golden, was now threaded by a few gray lines; a broad forehead, with large, benevolent, joyous blue eyes, and a mouth ample in development and frank in expression, were further set off by a peach-like complexion that many a girl in her teens would have envied. It was Sunday, and she was sitting quietly surrounded by a selection of small books, not nearly so pleasant-looking as herself.

Presently Mr. Hume entered. He was a pale, slight-made man, of a studious and venerative aspect, and in manner a little anxious and emphatic. He gave her numerous directions in matters parochial, scholastic, and theological, to which he added a supplement of orders concerning certain minute alterations which were to be made in the service that day.

“And, Mary, you will do that, and remember this.”

“Yes, Andrew; I’ll bear it in mind,” and she sat on calm and radiant as ever. More than

anything else this fidgeted him. Why did she continue to sit there with that easy truthful indifference, when the burden of one-and-twenty different commands had just been laid upon her shoulders? He knew *he* could not have done it, and he felt rather aggrieved that it was possible for her to do so. At any rate, he could not bear to see her stationary any longer, and, after casting about in his mind vainly for an errand which should require instant attention, he bethought himself of his watch, and, though he did avoid stating the exact hour, he could and did snap it with a noise audible enough to enable him to remark,—

“ Mary, you will put on your bonnet now; the kirk bell will soon be in.”

She knew it was full early, but rose instantly to comply with his wishes, and was soon slowly wending her way down from the manse. She sighed once or twice; perhaps she reproached herself for feeling a little impatient at her husband's many fears and precautions; possibly, she wished he had a little more of her own charming

and courageous unconcern. But like does not always draw to like in this world, fortunately for us. In the kirkyard was assembled, according to custom, a little crowd of worshippers, who were waiting for the bell to sound. Among these, Mrs. Hume made her way, not without a kind word for each, and shortly after she entered the church the service commenced. I saw Annie Cameron standing humbly bending her head like a drooping lily; and many an old shepherd was there, his plaid swathed round him, and his hard, bronzed face set in the sternness which he judged appropriate to the day. Some of these men had walked more than a dozen Scottish miles that day, and now stood, true to their Puritan observances, with unbending knee, but otherwise eminently reverential, quiet, and immovable. Five or six dogs were crouched about the church and at the pew doors, remaining on sufferance, and their behaviour was so good as to merit the favour.*

* Not always so, however. Dean Ramsay tells an anecdote of a clergyman, whose sermon was interrupted by the defiant

Some dozen verses of the ancient paraphrases had been sung, when the door opened, and a woman came in, not hesitatingly, but with a hunted, scared air, and dropped quietly on to a bench near the entrance. It was Jean o' the Isles, and Mrs. Hume bent forward and gave her an encouraging glance. The minister, with that sort of frank simplicity which is often to be found where, in retired districts, pastor and people are much bound together, gave utterance to what was passing in his mind, and continued his prayer thus :—

“ And lighten, O Lord! we beseech thee (if it please Thee not altogether to take away) the sadness of heart, and distress, and perplexity of mind, of the one on whom Thou hast more especially laid thy hand. Let not her night last for ever, nor her punishment be more than she can

howling of an old dog in the centre of the church. Probably, something vehement in the voice and gesture had jarred on the animal's nerves. The clergyman leaned forth and directed the precentor to “turn that dog out.” The old man complied, not without making this audible rejoinder, “But it was yourself that began it, minister.”

bear. Thou hast directed the way of her feet to thy house this day. Because she is a sorely afflicted woman, do Thou, O God ! have mercy on her."

There was a solemn pause ; Jean bent down her head, covering her face with her hands, and the tears oozed out between her bony fingers. Then she rose up and tottered out alone.

Within half an hour afterwards Mr. Hume raised his arms, as is the custom when the benediction or blessing is given ; the dogs hurried to and fro and wagged their tails, denoting their recognition of the fact that when the minister assumed that attitude the termination of the service was at hand ; and very shortly after the little congregation dispersed. Mr. Hume was detained by the school-children, and his wife, after waiting for some time, returned home alone to the manse by the same retired and circuitous path as before. The sun had withdrawn itself, the air was heavily charged with rain, and a gentle moaning of the wind announced a coming change sufficiently to induce Mrs. Hume to hurry her pace a little.

She heard a voice singing “Green grow the rushes, oh!”—not a Sabbath chant, certainly—and instinctively started forward to stop it, but checked herself as she reflected that it could be no one but poor Jean.

She turned the corner, and beheld, seated on a rock, the expected culprit. Her naked feet were wet and bleeding, and in her hands was a garland only half twisted; a few autumnal flowers, faded and pale, some dead leaves and bright night-shade berries, together with a handful of rushes, were gathered and laid by her side. How to finish weaving the garland with these was apparently what Jean was puzzling over. Mrs. Hume addressed her gently,—

“I was glad to see you at the church to-day, Jean; but why did you not stay for the blessing?”

“My mind aye havers; I canna bide lang onywhere,” said Jean, with a weary air.

Poor Mrs. Hume! she had intended to have administered a rebuke for that untimely retreat, and likewise to have glanced at the sin of fashion-

ing a garland on the Sabbath ; but the words died away on her lips as she met the glance of that mindless eye.

“ How have you cut your feet so, Jean ? ”

“ I dinna ken : the stanes i’ the burn, maybe. Ye see I was hurried, for Jamie called me frae the kirk ; and I was greeting, too ; the minister made me greet : it’s lang syne I hae dune that. And he is sair-hearted for his bride. He’s often, often calling out for her, and he looks to me to bring her ; for he lies very quiet, and canna seek her out, and I’m his mither, ye mind.* And yet Annie Cameron wadna come. My bonnie white

* A most extraordinary case of hallucination, in which also a dead man incessantly made petitions of his wife, is related by M. Brierre de Boismont. Madame M——, aged eighty-one, had lost her memory ; she could not recognize her children, and to all appearance her life was a blank. But her husband, who had died six years previously, was ever present to her. He appears as a soul to her, and is not above one foot in height. He wanders in the walls, on the roofs, in the streets, calls to her, complains of cold, because he is naked and hungry. She replies with sighs, shrieks, and howlings, and desires to have brandy, soup, and clothes brought. Almost incapable of walking, she endeavours to get to the courtyard, where he tells her to come. Sometimes he shows himself as a head to which wings are attached.—*Vide Boismont on Hallucinations*, p. 155.

lily she is, wi' its yellow threads on its white leaf. She does ill to say, 'Nay, nay,' for she is to be Jamie's bride, ye ken."

"But, Jean, poor Jamie's dead, you know; he was drowned in the Black Craigie pool. How should he have a bride?"

"He's nae dead; an' if he were dead, sal he no hae his gowden-haired lassie that he lo'ed sae weel?" Here she began to sing, "The Craigie hole sal be their bridal bed;" adding, "I hae smoothed it this mony a day past, but the waters aye pit the stanes out o' their place." Then the expression of her eye changed as the spectre of her son rose before her. "Do you see Jamie, Mrs. Hume, stauning behint ye? O Jamie man, dinna glower sae at me."

Mrs. Hume felt a strange thrill run through her from head to foot.

"Jean, my woman, Jamie has gone to heaven, where you must look to follow him in God's good time."

Jean answered not, but slowly turned her head and eyes, apparently following with her gaze the

direction of the phantom.* Then she suddenly sprang up, crying out as she did so,—

“ She maun come; he shall hae his bonnie bride yet,” and almost fled out of sight.

When Mrs. Hume returned home, she told her husband what she had seen.

“ It is a curious fancy poor Jean has on her,” he replied; “ there could not have been any love passages between Annie Cameron and the son of Angus M’Kenzie, for she is not seventeen yet, and it is hardly two years since the poor lad was drowned.”

Perhaps Mrs. Hume did not deem this reasoning quite so conclusive as did her husband, for she rejoined,—

* Bostock says, that apparitions always *follow the movement of the eyes*. In some cases, but not all, the intervention of an opaque body will conceal the fancied image. The case recorded by Sir Walter Scott in his *History of Demonology and Witchcraft* was of this kind. A skeleton appeared to a gentleman between the curtains at the foot of his bed. His physician, anxious to dispel the hallucination, placed himself in the exact spot between the curtains, “ Do you see the skeleton now?” he inquired of the patient. “ Much less,” was the answer; “ because you are between me and it; but *I see the skull over your shoulder.*”

“ It may be that he bore her some favour, Andrew, of which she knew nothing, or which was not pleasing to her.”

“ It may be so—it may be so, Mary,” said the minister, knitting his brows, “ for it is never possible to say when the trials and misfortunes for men commence as regards women.”

Mrs. Hume placed her hand over her husband’s mouth, and a smile rippled on her lips.

“ Hush, Andrew!” she said, adding, “ at any rate, I will warn Annie Cameron to be wary with the poor, crazed creature. She’s always hanging after the girl, and Annie is but a slender bit of a thing.”

“ You will do well,” said Mr. Hume; “ I think all the parish would sorrow the day any harm came to Annie Cameron.”

That craigie was a strange and yet a beautiful place. The little river, which ran noisily and merrily elsewhere, was hushed into silence here. It fell into a deep basin, where it lay stilled and cold, and its depths were clear and deep. The gray rock jutted out in a singularly

abrupt and precipitous manner, hanging over the pool, as if with jealous care that none should profane its haunts: from out of the clefts sprang wild grasses and struggling, knotted shrubs, and the rugged and naked sides of the rock were clothed, as it were lovingly, with a garment of pale green and gray lichens. Far off, black hills spurred into the sky, crowned with purple heather and black mist, and strewn with torrent-washed stones; but here the green moss hung tangled and forlorn on the birch-trees. The winds wept in its sighing and dying notes like the varying cadences of an *Æolian* harp; but neither ripple nor wave passed over the haunted pool: its waters remained sullen as the Dead Sea, and stirless as though the wind had no power over them.

Well might the winds moan and sigh, and the rocks drip tears, and the waters be still and silent. A swallow flew swiftly over them, sharply darting from right to left, twittering and scared, and hurried to rest its wing on some less eerie spot. Then came a murmur of many voices,

at first confused and distant, but growing louder, more definite and menacing each instant; and in it were mingled children's cries and snatches of singing, and the deeper tones of men and women in haste and wonder and distress. A little crowd was passing along the beetling brow of the Black Rock, and then turned directly upon the downward path that overlooked the basin beneath; and leading them on with shouts and wild cries, dancing, springing, and tossing her arms in the air, was Jean o' the Isles. She advanced so swiftly, that even the men were breathless; but one woman, with slender figure and blanched face, kept pace untiringly with her, and that woman was the mother of Annie Cameron.

They were close to the Craigie pool now, and strained and fearful eyes were bent over it, seeking to penetrate into its depths. What did they see?

Would that their eyes had been less true, or the waters less clear. For a fair young girl was there lying enshrined. Her long, yellow

hair was tangled among the stones, waving like river weeds: her face was turned upwards; and the waters moving over it, made the features wear a strange, distorted smile. Her hands were crossed peacefully on her breast.

Then there rose a shriek more terrible than those rocks and hills ever heard before, and a woman fell senseless to the ground, and was carried by the men to her home; the little procession following, bewildered and sorrowing.

* * * * *

It was never legally proved that the poor mad woman was the author of Annie Cameron's early death, for the positive evidence necessary to criminate her was, as far as regarded the testimony of others, slight in the extreme. But no moral doubt was entertained on the subject: however incoherent her ravings were, they all ran to one point, they were all of exultation, and the burden was unceasingly about the "White lily, with gowden hair, and her son Jamie, the King o' the Isles." But the very fact that it was by the ravings which poured from her own lips,

and by them only, that it became certain she and none other was the unconscious and irresponsible criminal who had desolated their home, this very fact was her protection in the eyes of the old man and his wife. "The Lord has afflicted her," they said; "and through her He has chastened us. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Old David Cameron bore the blow with the stern, unquestioning endurance which characterizes men of his stamp and training, and his wife with the forgiving spirit as regarded Jean, and the profound humility as regarded Heaven, which betoken not alone the submission of will which accepts the stroke, but that perfection of loving faith which also kisses the rod. As if in this last outbreak the disease had exhausted nature, poor Jean died not many weeks after this event. To use the expressive phrase of the Scotch, she "dwined away," and went to her rest. During her last few hours, there was not a return of reason, which could perhaps only

have procured for her a new wretchedness, but a merciful abeyance of memory; Jean forgot her cruel wrong, her scorned condition, her unstrung mind, and her broken heart. She thought no more of false Angus, of her dead son, or of the deed which was the climax of a lifelong desperation. All that portion of her forlorn life which referred to these sad things became an utter blank; and as these images faded out, another and a fairer vision rose before her. She saw herself in the days of her unstained womanhood, she lived again in the calm and innocence of the past, and in the happiness of that brief dream she passed away.

It was, I think, a trait full of pathos and beauty in the character of Mrs. Cameron, that she consoled poor Jean in the solemn sadness of the last moment: it was on her breast that the weary head rested when the sign manual of death was traced on the brow by the King of Terrors; and it was from her arms that poor Jeanie was summoned to a brighter life in the distant land.

Wandering Geordie.

THE other incident which I have thought worthy of record, relates to a catastrophe caused by an idiot, who bore the name of Wandering Geordie, if I remember rightly. It was, of course, well known at the time in the particular district where it occurred: but I have not seen it published before, and it was related to me by a person, who, if not an eye-witness of the event, was resident in the household where it took place.

Wandering Geordie was a powerfully built, ungainly youth, who was born and lived his life in a state of idiocy, though not of the lowest type. He was accessible only to the instincts of hunger, rage, and fear, of the same kind and in the same manner as the brute creation. His

notions of right and wrong were simply *nil*; but it would appear that he had some vague and imperfect conception of the personal appearance and attributes of the Devil. Like poor Will, he was a licensed wanderer about the country, and subsisted entirely on the chance charity in food and clothing which he received from those who were familiar with his person.

One day, he happened to enter the kitchen of the household of a Scottish gentleman, who possessed an appendage to his retinue of menials more common in those days than at present, *i. e.* a negro servant. The young African was standing by the fire engaged in turning the spit, when Geordie came in. The attention of the idiot was at once attracted by such an unusual, and in his eyes no doubt such a frightful object, and he appears instantly to have conceived the idea on which he proceeded to act. Two other servants were present in different parts of the kitchen; but being employed in their own avocations, they contented themselves by simply turning their heads, and smiling at the idiot's unusual

movements. Geordie advanced rather stealthily and circuitously towards the negro, repeating as he did so, in the most conciliatory manner which he had at command,—

“Bonnie deil, bonnie deil—I loe ye well—I loe ye well; dinna be gliffed, bonnie deil.” In this way he stole up, until he approached quite close to the unfortunate man, when he instantly seized the heavy poker, and brained the poor negro on the spot.

L O S T.

—♦—
“We die many times before we die.”—AUSTIN.
—♦—

“DEAR DOCTOR,

“September, 18—.

I HAVE a charge of some importance to confide to you. My only sister has been lately most unhappily circumstanced; and I fear her mind has given way under the pressure. A place of retreat seems absolutely required: from various reasons, I prefer placing her under your care. I was in hopes that this terrible necessity might have been avoided: but I will explain her malady more fully when we meet. The requisite certificates are in my possession. I shall bring her on the 14th instant (next week).

“I remain, dear doctor, yours faithfully,

“HENRY L. V—.

“P.S.—On consideration, I shall not be with you until the 14th of next month.”

“V——! V——!” I repeated to myself, rather at a loss, though the name sounded familiar to my ears; but now, in a minute or two, it flashed across my mind. I remembered a boy of that name at school with me, some fourteen or fifteen years before—a dark, slim, reserved lad. He was a junior when I was on the point of leaving school; but I recollect perfectly well his sister—a very lovely girl—parting from him: his only sister, he told me, in palliation of the almost passionate grief with which he watched her departure. It was understood, at that time, that his father was a somewhat singular and austere man, living in great retirement upon his estate in the wilds of —. Their mother I never heard mentioned; she had, I concluded, died young.

I saw young V—— once in town, at R——’s house, just after he had left Oxford; and R—— pointed him out to me as the last male heir of a very ancient Scottish family, and a young man of great powers; but represented him as characterized by gloomy and ascetic notions.

There was an indefinable something about him which interested me; I requested to be introduced to him, and claimed my old school-fellow. Some time after, a rumour reached me that one of his family—I think it was his sister—had become a convert to the Roman Church. I knew no more; and with these meagre scraps, which were all my memory could offer of information, I was forced to be content for the present, and resolved to wait and see what the day in question would bring forth.

The 14th came. It was the afternoon of a warm October day; that harvest-like smell of the richness of corn seemed to pervade the length of the land, and was wafted over the broad fields, mingled with the scent of certain autumnal herbs and flowers. I rejoiced that the sky was bright and sunny. I was glad the air was balmy and still. There is gloom and melancholy enough on occasions like these, without its being reflected and multiplied by the elements. A close travelling-carriage drove up,

and a card was sent in. It was as I conjectured. “Mr. V——” was pencilled hurriedly on it. I immediately hastened to the library to receive my guests.

When I entered, both had their backs partially turned towards the door; one was gazing out of the window—the gentleman apparently (not really) reading a book. Their profiles were visible; and a full, warm, mellow ray of sunlight fell through the stained glass on their features. I stood an instant before I announced my entrance, struck by the remarkable similarity in the shape and *pose* of the two heads, allowing for the necessary difference between a male and female. Mr. V—— turned round.

I said, in a cheerful tone, “How are you?”

“Ah, doctor—how d’ye do?”

I begged to be presented to his sister. She bowed gracefully, but with an air of entire abstraction. Her face wore the expression of one internally intent on things beyond our ken.

After some general conversation, not, perhaps, very easily sustained, and in which she

made no attempt to join, I asked him to remain the night. This he declined rather peremptorily. I rang, and sent for an attendant to show Miss V—— her rooms, relieve her of her travelling-dress, &c.; as I felt it was necessary to see her brother in private, to obtain more details respecting his sister.

He was much shaken when he took leave of her, poor fellow! I remembered his boyish agony at school. How infinitely more horrible now! As for her, she seemed concerned, not to part, but that *he* should feel parting so much; and even for the few minutes it lasted, her mind had already reverted to other thoughts.

As soon as she had quitted the room, he said,—

“Well, doctor—what do you think of her? Is it not terrible? What do you say? Is her case hopeless?”

“My dear sir, how can I possibly pronounce an opinion on such very slight data?”

“Ah, doctor, you do not know how despair——”
He shuddered.

“Come, come. I insist on your taking some refreshment.”

I poured out a glass of wine, and endeavoured to turn the conversation on other subjects until he should be calmer. I found his conversational powers remarkably good; and once or twice, when he described incidents of travel, it was done graphically, and with curious minuteness: there was about it a dwelling on details, combined with an evident tincture of melancholy and a leaning to the dark side of things.

At length he recurred to his sister’s case, and I begged him to furnish me with the particulars, symptoms, &c.

“I will try,” he said, sadly. “She was once a lovely, healthy girl, and always enjoyed better spirits than ever I had. She was about seventeen, I think, when she first appeared not to be so strong. She grew reserved and serious. We had been educated in strict Calvinistic tenets; and she had always given much time to the consideration of her religious duties. They seemed gradually to weigh more and more on her, until

long fits of despondency almost alternated with a sort of hysterical terror.

“A gentleman, a distant relation of ours, was at this period staying with us, very contrary to my father’s usual custom. He was half Italian blood, and of singularly cultivated mind and manners; but, being called from home, I had little time or opportunity to ascertain more. Before I returned, he had left, and when next I saw my sister, her looks struck fear into me. God knows whether I judge him unjustly or no; whether he trifled with her affections——”

He stopped, much agitated.

“Excuse me, Mr. V——; but was your sister’s health affected?” I inquired.

“Ah, indifferent, I believe: very.”

“But your father, did he pay no attention to it?” I persisted.

“My father was kind when we saw him, which was, however, rarely; he was habitually too reserved and fond of solitude to notice passing things, unless they were pointed out to him.”

“And your mother?”

“I never knew my mother,” he answered, gloomily.

I had touched on a jarring chord; but a very suggestive one to me. Why had he never known her? He did not say she was dead. Was it possible she had been in seclusion, and if so, from what cause? Was there insanity descending from that quarter? I felt, I scarcely know why, as I looked at Mr. V——, that if either he or his sister were insane, it was from hereditary predisposition. My attention became riveted on my guest. He proceeded.

“Not long after this, Mary began to shun all society, and perceptibly to grow more and more abstracted. Rain or fair, she wandered incessantly round the grounds alone, and finally one day astounded me, by announcing that she had discovered a relief to her mental sufferings. She formally renounced our faith for that of the Church of Rome! How or in what manner she had been induced to do this, or even project such an idea, is inconceivable. The gentleman I before alluded to always attended our service, and was, I imagined, of our persuasion.

The state of my father, when this step became known to him, was fearful to contemplate. He did not curse her, but he groaned, and bowed his head. I thought it would have driven him mad." (He whitened as he said this.) "Then father and daughter shunned each other. Her penances and self-inflections were something extraordinary, I believe. It was very harrowing to see it, doctor.

"In fourteen months from that time, she avowed that the anticipated peace had not been found, and abjured the Church she had in such an evil moment embraced. From that time she believed herself quite lost: hopelessly so; doomed as an apostate. What do you think, doctor? Is such sin past forgiveness?"

I can never forget the miserable, anxious look his face wore, as he asked this; he seemed as though he wanted to hang his doubts on me.

"God forbid," I replied, solemnly; "then indeed Christ would have died in vain. Repentance for sin is right and fitting; but, through the

physical state of your sister, repentance had become remorse and despair."

"True," he said, sighing.

"How long," I asked, "has it been thus?"

"Nearly four years. I am three years her junior, doctor."

I inquired her age (which proved, as I expected, to be about twenty-seven) and some other professional particulars.

"Are her nights disturbed?"

"Ah, yes, indeed. She screams fearfully; and, as I understand her to say, has horrible visitations: but with the fearful doom on her, that is not wonderful. And now, doctor, her mind has given way under it."

Strange! he evidently believed in this inevitable doom, as much as his sister. Not perceiving that the derangement of the intellect had preceded this fixed belief, he imagined that the reality of such doom had borne down the intellect.*

* An eminent French physician (Dr. Moreau) has recorded an observation, which I have had constant occasion to verify—namely, the similarity often existing between the insane and

He asked again whether I considered her incurable. I, of course, declined giving any definite opinion, though I confessed I was not very sanguine. In my own mind I had formed a very unfavourable view of her case. Monomania, in general, gives less occasion for hope than many other forms of insanity, and when the particular delusion has reference to religion, the treatment of it becomes of tenfold difficulty; being altogether fixed on what is spiritual, vague, and indefinite, it is all but unassailable.

Besides, there was another, and a very painful suspicion, which I had not forgotten—that insanity was hereditary in the family of V—. Many peculiarities in Mr. V— led me to infer that his mind was in an excited, not to say morbid, state. If that appeared in both brother and sister, the probability was, that one parent at least had exhibited the same; or if it had slumbered in one generation, it might have existed in the

their friends or relations who bring them:—their unusual and somewhat peculiar expressions, hurried gestures, and excited or abstracted air, these becoming most prominent when they have to describe any symptom or delusion of the patient.

previous one. Was his father's seclusion from the world owing to natural disposition, or the consequence of some calamity connected with his wife? Mr. V—— had been very reserved on the subject of his mother.

I resolved mentally to investigate the family history more fully at some future time. Something might, perhaps, be learned from Miss V——. I have met with curious specimens of both sorts: relations who were very secret on this head, and crafty to a degree, in endeavouring to prevent my acquiring the knowledge of such a fact, even when the patient has not only openly alluded to it, but advanced it as an excuse for his behaviour. And again, I have known members of a family, on being questioned, admitting it without reserve, speaking of it in the most reckless and phlegmatic manner, while the brother or sister they have placed under my care conceals or denies the circumstance with much subtlety and perseverance.

It was late in the evening before the carriage conveyed Mr. V—— from the door. He took

leave abruptly, and I thought nervously. My mind certainly misgave me.

* * * * *

I saw Miss V—— the next day in the full morning light. My eye did indeed rest on a wreck. I cannot say that I found it difficult to recognize her as the slender, lovely girl I saw at school; for she was eminently what the imagination would picture to itself as that which insanity might leave out of the melancholy and commanding style of beauty Miss V—— once possessed. Her black hair, scanty, and in some places of uneven length, was plentifully streaked with grey; there was a dark shade round the eyes, the cheeks were sunken, and the hands, tightly holding one another, cold and clammy; the nails being pitifully torn and broken, as though by constant nervous irritability.

She rose to receive me with quiet dignity: that undefinable air of birth and breeding lingered about her, which, according to my experience, the worst form of insanity can never wholly destroy.

It was not many days before I had established confidence between myself and my patient. She was the reverse of uncommunicative. Indeed, I think the difference between sane and insane despair is marked by the last named being strangely blended with garrulity. Wholly rejecting the idea of being insane, she accounted for her state in her own fashion.

I wrote down part of her tale from memory: it formed truly a monomaniac's history.

She described several scenes in her girlish days, and dwelt long on the beauty of the old hall and surrounding scenery. She added, with more mystery in her manner:

“Leading to the left wing of my father's house, there ran a long corridor. It was a gloomy place, darkened with deep-coloured stained glass; and it was noticeable, that whereas elsewhere vestiges, records, and pictures of the sufferings of the old Puritans were to be met with, the designs in the stained glass were principally relating to saints and martyrs. Portraits of our ancestors hung against the wall: they were

mostly grim and terrible. I always felt, however, a certain charm about this gallery, notwithstanding the childish awe which used to make me hurry through it with palpitating heart and quick, listening ears; for I knew that beyond this lay a pleasant place for me: rooms and gardens decked in such wild and fantastic style as to seem in my eyes a sort of fairyland.

“With all this is bound up the memory of a very pale lady, who used to caress me, and part my black silken hair on my forehead, and say, ‘My beautiful, my lost one!’ and even when most caressing, she would whisper in my ears, ‘Lost! Lost!’ I paid but little attention to these words at that time. There was also present on these occasions a staid-looking woman, who often sent me away before I would willingly have gone. I remember this lady wore a long black string of beads, and she often playfully hung them round my neck.

“Some time elapsed, and then, when I tried to make my way through the corridor, all was closed; and my nurse told me that the pale

lady was my mother, and that she had been a papist. I knew that name to be synonymous in nurse's imagination with all that was dreadful; indeed, she gave a fearful account of that religion, and said further, that my mother had ever been unhappy in her mind; which, she doubted not, was owing to the power that the evil one was suffered to hold over those of that faith. I wept when I found this gentle being had really been my mother: I was older then, and, without being told, I felt that she was dead."

There was a long pause. I was meditating, and she seemed buried in abstraction.

"Tell me further, Miss V——," I said at last.

She continued: "Months passed on. My mind was truly disquieted within me. I reflected, and, reflecting, I nearly despaired. My religion gave me little consolation. That all things are destined from the beginning, I could not doubt. It was without question known and recorded above how my life would open—how the death

scene should close; whether I was to be one of the elect, predestined to salvation, or, horrible! one of the dark ones, doomed to be lost. Lost! ay, that was the word. Had not my mother long ago pronounced me 'lost?' I could feel no sort of experience of grace: I loved God less than I feared Him; I sometimes even asked blasphemously, why I was brought into the world, but to add another to the millions of those who groan and will groan. Neither did the denunciations or persuasions of the minister calm me; for it was too evident that there was in me none of that unspeakable joy and holy confidence which distinguish those who are indeed Heaven's own.

"My health began to give way: I loathed my food; my nights were filled with fears; I seemed to hear voices calling to me, though I could discern no visible person. Then, indeed, my agony increased, for I knew the evil one was gaining on me.

"Well, doctor, one night a voice spoke to me, and I saw plainly a vision; and of this

sort it was: I beheld heaven, and afar off was hell: the figures in this last place were not perfectly distinguishable, but only their groanings; while on the contrary, in the heaven the spirits were glorious and clear, standing in warm, glowing light. Bands of fair angels they were, bound to one another by golden links; and foremost among them stood my mother; she smiled, and beckoned with her finger, pointing to the place by her, which I should occupy if I would only come, and signifying that otherwise my lot would be cast with the groaners. The memory of this haunted me: it showed me that, if my mother was really blessed, her religion, not mine, must be the true one.

“My father did not usually receive visitors; but about this time a gentleman arrived at the hall, and, unlike our usual custom, was asked to remain. He was related to my mother, and was also a Catholic, but was descended from a lower branch of her family. He had spent all his life in Italy. Many times he would speak to me in private of my gentle mother, and his

dark eyes looked troubled and angry on this subject."

She hurried on: "Doctor, it was not long before I learned that he loved me, and, alas! that I loved him. Oh, would that I had died then!" she exclaimed, with sudden energy, covering her eyes with her hands. Oh, love! how fatally entwined in every fold of a woman's life!

This poor girl was failing in health, tormented, and trembling under religious terrors of an unusually severe nature; struggling, each day more faintly, with a black despondency, the incubus of a dire disease hanging over her! Was not this her sufficient meed of woe, that love should creep in, to add his burden of bitterness? There was a certain womanly consciousness in her manner, as she made this confession, which touched me.

"Why, then," I inquired, "did you not marry?"

"Pride, doctor. Our blood ran in his veins, it is true; but it was mingled with other less pure and ancient—it was no meet match for a V—. No; my hand shook, my pulse stood

still, and my heart almost broke, but I refused him scornfully; and he left us in haste and anger. And then, doctor, I said internally, 'I will not be your wife here, but your faith shall become my faith, and as spirits we will dwell together.'

"So I apostatized; to the great horror of my father and brother, who of course did not understand my motives, and, not having had my revelations, were entirely in the dark concerning all that rendered this step so easy to me. I exulted in the fearful knowledge, that though on earth I could not be happy with him, yet in heaven it might be so. Alas! the peace I looked for was yet far off.

"It is now nearly five years since, I think, when one night that happened of which I shall carry the memory to my grave, and beyond it. I waked from sleep, and saw—terrible things did I see. What were they? Many spirits fair; and one touched me, and said, 'Lo! come!' So I rose, and followed, by an impulse from within which I could by no means restrain.

I saw much which resembled what had appeared to me before; but there was a difference, and fear and trembling from this difference. There was a beautiful angel, and she seemed the figure who had in childhood smoothed my hair with her hands, and muttered, ‘Lost! lost!’ But now it was a beautiful fiend, and I saw plainly that those whom I had taken for angels of light were but dark demons; and they were fearful. And the links, which my blindness said were golden, were of burning fire; and all these things were so, and seemed to make my head whirl: they crushed my brain. Then I knew that the beautiful fiend was but a fallen spirit, permitted to tempt me to my doom. I understood that what I had in fear, ay, and in unrighteous love, embraced, was drunk with the blood of prophets and of martyrs.

“Thinking on these things, I abjured; and when I thus abjured, a voice from heaven shouted after me, ‘Apostate! and double apostate! Rest shall not be thine, either night or day! Like Judas, so hast thou sold thy Master.

Look ! behold !' And I saw souls innumerable in hell ; and I knew that my sin had brought them there, and that the example would continue through all eternity, ensnaring others, whereof the guilt would still be mine. And a voice said, 'Thou shalt neither eat bread, nor drink water, nor lie down to sleep, because double apostate thou art.'

"And from that moment all desire for food or sleep left me. But it was mercifully ordained thus : perish I must, no doubt ; for such as I it was a merciful doom, for God knew that I was physically a coward. I could not draw knife or rope on myself ; I shrank from casting my body into the blue waters of the lake ; as many another, so tempted and erring, would have done. But from eating I could refrain ; and yet even in this the flesh too often held me back from obeying the divine command. Shame, shame !" (here she groaned aloud) "that so vile feelings of earth should have moved me ! And now no night passed that I was not visited by these nocturnal visions ; and bitterly and

long have they made me cry out, because the spirits never ceased to demand a sacrifice of me—and for sinful cowardice I gave it them not.

“But what are these words and scenes, as I speak them, doctor? They come tamely forth out of my lips; and yet, if they were to you as they are to me, they would burn your brain as I tell you them. Ah, how my mother’s words came to memory! How futile to try to save one who was predestined from all time to be lost! If the Lord was not omnipotent, why was he Lord?

“Then a man in the dress of a priest touched me, and said, ‘By faith all things are cured; but those who doubt shall with difficulty be healed.’ But by no prayers, or tears, or fasting, did my terrible fears get ease. I was once fair, and my hair raven black and silky, and see what I am now! Bent, doctor, worn, and grey-haired” (and she tore a fragment of hair from her head violently). “Why does not God erase my example from the earth, so that no more

may follow it? For of course their sins are added each moment more to my load."

"Do you continue up to this time to see such visions?" I asked.

"Yes; every night I do, and the chief features are perpetually the same. I have said the most beautiful prayers; I have remonstrated with my mother; I have reasoned with myself; it is not common sense that the All-wise One should so severely punish one who has sincerely repented. The Bible itself says differently; but you see, of course He who inspired the writers of the Bible could inspire others. And this is an entirely new revelation. I have besought God to reverse this doom; but even when I read, a finger writes on the margin of the page, 'Rest is not yours, apostate and doomed!'"

Of course her tale is given without all its incoherencies and breaks. For incessantly she turned from me, and gave a wailing cry, her eyes closed, and her whole face became so drawn and scored with agony, that to see a picture so painted, I believe spectators would stand before

it, and marvel what awful thought could have shadowed out so direful an expression. I observed that, when she spoke of her childish days, she was tolerably coherent, but not minute, and she remembered with effort; but when she described the period of her delusions and developed insanity, it was done with careful detail, a sort of mania seemed active then, and caused an unusual and felicitous flow of words and analogies, though perhaps of an exaggerated order. But coherency of thought, and powers of comparison, were wholly wanting. She only noted likenesses between things, not differences; so that occurrences had no sort of proportion to their causes or results. It was a sad tale, and told touchingly enough.

Her eyes wore a terrible expression all this time. I cannot describe them, unless by saying they burned, and the fuel that fed that flame was despair. I mentioned before that they were remarkably sunken, and the prominence of the bone above threw them into a shadow in which they literally danced. What she had told me

was all uttered with extreme rapidity, and with an air of the most perfect conviction of the truth and hopelessness of her case.

At last she laid her hand on mine confidentially, and said,—

“Doctor, I will tell you something. This doom also hangs over my brother: it has not yet fallen. It is that which makes him so gloomy.”

What did she mean? Was she foretelling his insanity?

“Come, Miss V——,” I said, “we have had enough of these melancholy subjects. Oblige me now by accompanying me through the grounds.”

She complied. I found her possessed of an elegant and cultivated mind; a keen admiration of scenery, and something of a painter’s eye for beauties of that order. She spoke well, too; and was, as far as I could discover, perfectly rational on all topics save the one connected with her delusion,—as if her insanity on one point had rendered her faculties doubly acute on all others.

But her constant and inveterate habit was to

burst suddenly forth in the most mournful appeals and prayers. Sometimes these were expostulations with invisible spirits—sometimes only a monotonous moaning, and ejaculations of, “O God! O my God!”

From all that I had heard and seen I could only gather the true state of the case to be this:—a propensity to melancholy, and a susceptible nervous temperament hereditary in the V—— family, predisposed to insanity; and this the seclusion which they all seemed to seek was ill calculated to dissipate, still less the Calvinistic form of religion in which they had been nurtured.

I am speaking, not from a religious, but from a medical, point of view, when I say that the doctrines of Sensible Election and Predestination are fraught with danger to an imaginative or despondent disposition. In my own experience, they have been instrumental in producing some fearful examples of madness.

I extracted from her such details concerning the state of her own health during that period,

as showed that her over-wrought anxiety had taken considerable hold on it.

Insanity has a twofold aspect—a physical, and a psychical one. There is scarcely one bodily function which excessive grief and anxiety may not affect or impair. On the other hand, any physical cause which operates to disturb the due exercise of those functions, is capable of causing the most distressing and harassing mental sensations.*

* The fifth pair of nerves, or trifacial, spread almost all over the face, and being in close connection with the great sympathetic, or largest knot of nerves, it is easy to suppose almost all morbid conditions, whether physical or no, are in general faithfully reflected in the physiognomy:—the discontented, fretful expression of the dyspeptic, the intensely anxious look which often denotes organic affections of the heart, the moroseness which warns of a determination of blood to the head, or the groundless and excessive terror which characterizes sufferers in the nervous system. This doctrine was in former times held with curious minuteness; and a foreign physician (Jadelot) has revived the proposition, affirming that there are three divisions of the face answering to the three principal cavities of the body, and that any unwonted suffering in the last is reflected in the first; that disease in the cerebral system is indicated by the peculiar lines, linea oocularis; in the abdomen by the linea nasalis; and in the cavity of the chest by the linea labialis. This may sound fanciful; but I think a little careful observation in society will convince any one that there is some truth in

So long as we are on earth, so long will our mental state be inextricably linked with our physical condition. I am convinced that a timely course of medicine has often averted impending insanity; not less so than the influence of a strong, cheerful mind may have done in other cases.

Circumstances had combined against my patient. Anxiety had acted on the body, which again, by the mysterious laws of nature, reacted on the mind; the reign of delusion set in; and her natural inclinations gave it a religious bent, which, of all forms, abounds most in spectral illusions. The singular notion of rejoining the man to whom she was attached could never have been received until reason had been more or less thrown off its balance; her mind must have vibrated between terrors and hopes, until at length the poor girl must have yielded up her whole being to the one prevalent idea. It certainly is better than doubt; she might even have found it a miserable relief—but what a relief!

this theory. An accurate and attentive study of the physiognomy of those known to be so diseased is a good preliminary lesson.

Many sorts of madness have their own peculiar joys, amounting, in some, to a delirium of happiness. But here there was none. Not one ray of light broke the darkness. The reason had fled which tells us that after night must come day; the health had faded, which whispers hope even against hope: the disease reverses every natural feeling, so that she could reap no comfort from sympathy or tenderness; for the ties of kith and kin were as nought to her. Instead of animal spirits and a warm, bounding pulse, there swayed a cold, clammy, ghastly insanity; making her, indeed, like one dead, as regards that fixed eye which turns not aside to look on objects dear or hated. As a physician, it was to me a formidable and dispiriting case, presenting a perfect instance of that form of mental derangement known as fixed delusion.*

I felt instinctively that argument would be

* Fixed delusions with respect to the bodily state occur very commonly in advanced stages of hypochondriasis, and also occasionally in the delirium of fever of the typhoid type, and are persevered in with amazing obstinacy and immovable gravity. But it was manifestly otherwise with Miss V—.

useless. Had I by force of logic got the better of her, she could not for that have been one whit more convinced. Indeed, I verily believe she would sooner have distrusted all her senses, and held the world for a phantom, than relinquish her theory. Had I succeeded in destroying that particular delusion, it would not have affected the state of mind from which it sprang: perhaps another more horrible would have been engendered.*

On the other hand, I took care to let her understand that I did not regard her histories as factitious, or herself as an impostor. Admitting fully that she saw all she described, I at the same time distinctly protested that she was at issue with all the world in these matters; expressing my opinion that they were phantoms caused by disease, and

* I once witnessed an unfortunate example of that kind. A fixed delusion had been dislodged by a happy remark of the physician; it was only succeeded, to his dismay, by one more ridiculous; and, from that date, every time he saw his patient, some whim more monstrous or inconvenient than the last had got possession of his brain. The *continuity* of delusion had been destroyed, but not the intensity.

that her views would ultimately change. I found this mode generally inspired a certain degree of confidence and hope in the patient.

Her screams at night were so fearful, that I was compelled to have her placed in a remote chamber. They commenced about one or two in the morning, and continued at intervals until the day broke ; neither had a darkened room the smallest sedative effect. She explained her outcries, by stating that spirits enticed her to follow them ; when she did so, they dropped into a black yawning chasm, round the edge of which there seemed a charm, which drew her feet, in spite of herself ; that this feeling impelled her to utter screams, which had the effect of causing the edge to glide away from her. No wonder she screamed : it was painfully ludicrous. I visited her once or twice on these occasions, to ascertain her apparent condition. I found her almost stiff, streaming with cold perspiration, and her hands clenched.*

* There is a smaller proportion of cures effected in this form of insanity than in many others—as, for instance, mania—and of these recoveries not many patients are found who retain

Her bodily health being far from satisfactory, I ordered some suitable medicines, which, however, as may be supposed, her attendant had much difficulty in inducing her to take. She had evidently not been accustomed either to control herself or to be controlled. I resolved to try to induce some degree of self-control, conjecturing that the extreme pride she frequently evinced might be made a useful implement for the purpose. She was fond of narrating her visions and sufferings, picturing them sometimes with wonderful eloquence; but they became by repetition most wearying. I discouraged this tendency to expatiate, convinced that it only fed her disease, and their recollection of their state of mind during the malady. This throws an obstacle in the way of ascertaining their actual feelings at that period. Two who did so, told me that they had never wholly enjoyed their delusions (one had supposed himself Christ, and the other Prime Minister to Napoleon); but that some misgiving as to the reality of their exalted station had occasionally crept in; at which times doubts expressed on the same points by any other person were especially offensive, and made them feel furious. But these were happy delusions; would it be the same in reverse cases? I fear it would be difficult to hope that Miss V——'s fears were otherwise than most real and terrible to her, from the physical effects which I have described above.

tried to persuade her to write it all down instead, remarking that when anything quite new came, she was to mention it to me, but not before. This task, however, she never performed; the mechanical exertion and attention which it required were probably incompatible with her melancholy abstraction.

By the way, if a madman can be induced to put pen to paper, I know of nothing which affords clearer insight into the extent or nature of his derangement; it is a test which has often betrayed the existence of insanity, when it has been concealed with a cunning, baffling skill.

Anything which promised to divert her mind I eagerly embraced. In disputes concerning genealogy, etiquette, &c., matters on the knowledge of which I knew she piqued herself, I found her a tart and able opponent, possessing an extraordinarily retentive memory. I also affected to be extremely punctilious and *difficile* respecting her mode of dress, noticing that she neglected it: as is almost invariably the case with the insane. I used to remark pointedly, and with an offended

air, on any nicety omitted, or an article that was *outré* or unbecoming; and I could see by the raised colour that the woman was not quite dead in her. She soon paid more habitual attention to her dress. One morning I entered her room.

“Miss V——, I am coming to take tea with you this evening, and shall bring a friend or two with me. You will entertain us, will you not?”

“Impossible, doctor; I am unfit to entertain any one now.”

“How?” I remonstrated. “Have you forgotten the knowledge of the usages of society?”

“No, doctor; but how can I think of such things? Consider, I am out of society—out of mortality” (she raised her voice)—“O my God, lost!”

I interrupted her:

“Answer me, Miss V—— Are you unable to enact the well-born and well-bred gentlewoman?”

“No, doctor, never,” haughtily.

“Well, then, endeavour to please me in this

instance. Do not refuse to my friends the courtesies you know so well how to offer."

"Are they any of the poor creatures who are under your care, doctor? for I know where I am. Though I'm not mad, I'm only fit to be classed with them."

"Yes," I said, "one or two of them will be; and, remember, I shall trust to your not betraying your particular delusion before them. You will oblige me, I know, if possible: and do not forget to dress becomingly."

I presented her with a cluster of the brilliant scarlet flowers of the japonica, remarking, that they would suit her dark hair, and took my leave.

At the appointed hour I attended, with two patients and a medical friend. I always carefully placed my melancholy patients in bright and cheerful rooms. The windows were lightly draped with crimson curtains, which I perceived at a glance had this day been arranged in more than usually graceful folds. On these the rays of the sinking sun fell, giving them a still warmer glow. The window opening to the ground looked

on a small turf^y lawn, belted on each side by shrubs. On the table was a snowy cloth, and thereon, placed with infinite care and precision, were tiny, curious, old-fashioned china cups. They were of extraordinary beauty and fragility, and were, I knew, highly valued by Miss V——. Poor thing! she had brought them out to do us honour; though I inwardly trembled for their safety in present company.

Such scenes had an intense interest for me. The care with which guests and hostess strove to conceal their state from each other (for most lunatics are more or less aware of it), the polish which still lingered in their address, the strenuously-suppressed irritability, the half-veiled melancholy, were most affecting! Once I thought Miss V—— was about to give way. She pressed her hand to her forehead, and groaned.

“ Ha!” exclaimed the lady next me, a somewhat explosive subject.

It is astonishing how infectious excitement is with diseased nerves! One paroxysm will set a whole ward in an uproar.

“Ha!” came again; and this time prolonged and loud.

I said, distinctly and quietly,—

“Miss V—— is not happy; yet you see she controls herself, and nevertheless entertains her guests.”

This observation had the desired effect. I employed her as much as I could invent occasion for, in her capacity of hostess, begged her to superintend the making of the tea, and to give the necessary orders. I was pleased to observe that this little entertainment was productive of good, and somewhat diverted her mind, though in a temporary manner. It was repeated more than once.

* * * *

Miss V——’s bodily health certainly improved, and she dwelt, perhaps, less noisily on her griefs. Her nights were also more tranquil. This she explained by asserting that her visions, though as frequent, were less frightful; indeed they appeared to me to threaten to become of the nature of ecstatic: not a change, indeed, which

augured much for cure. She did not attempt to account for this, or to reconcile it to her notion of being doomed to misery ; indeed I don't think she ever noticed the contradiction. And yet this woman spoke on all other subjects with intelligence and judgment, and had often seized on any weak point of argument or slip of tongue on my part, and held it up with no mean power of sarcasm. But in all she did or said, there was a proneness to a strange obstinacy and tenacity of opinion. As an instance how completely her prevailing delusion possessed her, I may mention, one day in describing for the one-hundredth time her miseries, she exclaimed, "That for an error ignorantly committed, I should not be allowed to obtain forgiveness, is so strange, it does not sound like common sense ; does it, doctor ?"

"No, indeed," I said, pointedly ; "it sounds much more like insanity. You perceive that yourself, then, Miss V——?"

"Oh, doctor," she said, with a pitying smile, when she saw my drift, "but this is a revela-

tion: you understand the difference, do you not? There is much, you must be aware, in the Bible irreconcilable with common sense."

How hopeless it was to argue such a point!

One day she suddenly asked, "How do people feel when they are going mad, doctor?"

"It would be rather difficult to ascertain," I said, quietly.

"Ay, and yet I could imagine it: one thought might overpower the mind; eh, doctor?"

I nodded.

"Ah!" (thoughtfully) "it would be something in this way: they would have some one very strong feeling—grief, perhaps; that would not be an uncommon case, doctor?"

"True."

"And it would pursue them night and day, they nursing it. Does not one of our poets speak of 'the luxury of woe?'"

I expressed pleasure at her memory being so active.

"But after awhile it would come unsummoned, and refuse to go when dismissed; then, doctor,

they would begin to hate this idea, but, loving it, or hating it, it would still stay by them."

"Well," I observed, much interested, "what next?"

"Why, I suppose it would become a reality to them in time; they will struggle for a space, and then cease to struggle, and the grief will enter into them and become part of them. Mad! doctor?"

"Yes, unless their health keeps good, and makes them victor in their fearful struggle; but sorrow first depressing it, makes it in a bad starting condition."

"Then," said Miss V——, "they would, no doubt, rule their conduct to accord with this new view of things?"

"Yes," I rejoined; "they have will to act, but no longer possess a free choice as to what that will is to be. They are mad, and, of course, no longer responsible."

A deep sigh. "There is a certain happiness in being mad. They are happier than I am."

"Yes," I said, mechanically.

Either by intuition or from experience, she had sketched very correctly the several conditions of morbid minds, as far as they can be ascertained usually.

“If your perceptions on the one point regarding yourself were healthy, Miss V——, I should call you sane. At present, on that point I contend you are insane. Do you not remark a striking analogy between the case you have described and your own?”

She smiled bitterly.

“Doctor,” she said, with a face that bore the expression of extreme anguish, “I wish only that God would mercifully make me believe that I am insane.”

She covered her face with her gown, and turned to the wall. I left her.

* * * * *

It was a warm day; the air had been throughout heavy and sultry; there was a dull, reddish hue spreading over some parts of the skies, others were bronzed, pale, ghastly yellow. The clouds were slowly blackening, and the atmosphere

seemed unusually charged with electricity. It had consequently been a day of disquiet among my patients. Thunder I have invariably found greatly to affect the insane, thoroughly unnerving and depressing some, rendering others furious, and all moody. In those that sit and listen, apparently motionless and unseeing, it nevertheless produces all the physical effects of extreme terror.

About 6 P.M. a sudden sob of wind announced that the storm was on us. A quick brilliant burst of lightning was the signal for such a roar of thunder as I have rarely heard; after that burst came short quick cracks, and then a sullen booming. Lightning was less in broad flashes than in glancing blue darts, which seemed to be shot in a dozen different directions. I hastened into the rooms, and along the wards. It was a sad, a humiliating sight, as I passed on my way. One girl was on the ground, cowering in a corner, her hand tightly covering her eyes, trying to shut out that frightful fire, her attendant vainly endeavouring to soothe her. In another

room a man stood in impotent wrath, defying it. With shaven head and bloodshot eyeballs he menaced ; the most fearful imprecations burst from his lips, broken with prolonged peals of laughter. He was generally squatted or couched on the earth, but now stood erect, and more manlike. I had seen him, poor fellow ! keep his friends in continuous delight with his eloquence.

In the gallery in the extreme distance, I saw a figure standing close to an open window. It was Miss V—— But how shall I describe her ? Her face was whitened, less from fear than from excitement ; and a fearful calmness, nay, half joy, was written thereon. Her hair was pushed back, and the lightning blazed over her broad forehead. I could have half fancied it met and mingled in her eyes. Oh, the insane gleam which shot forth from them ! She had her arms wound tightly round a shrinking form.

“ Miss V——,” I said, “ why do you stand there ? It is most dangerous ; you might at any moment be blinded ! ”

“ Ah, no, doctor,” she replied, with a strange

quickness ; “ you forget it might dance all round me, as it does merrily, and not harm me. I’m scathless : why strike one already stricken ? No, the lightning cannot hurt me. The truth is, I am standing here as a sort of sacrifice and shield for my friend, who is sadly alarmed, you see.”

As I looked in her face, I understood the wonderful calmness which Mahometans are said to possess. O Fatalism ! thou dreary doctrine, is there strength in thy gloom ? is there rest in thy despair ?

She bent over the young girl, saying :

“ Annie, my sweet Annie, do not be afraid ; I stand between you and it ; do not bury your head on my shoulder.”

A low convulsed moan alone answered.

Miss V—— proceeded rapidly : “ Heaven was rent but just now, doctor, and I saw the company which I shall never join, and heard the voices of the angels who sang in vain for me. Do you not notice the lightning is especially bright when it falls on my eyes ? ”

I looked at her. A forked gleam made me in-

voluntarily start. What she had described seemed literally about to be realized ; for, as she spoke, the very heaviest mass of cloud, which had hung sullen and motionless, was cleft and torn in twain, and the black rugged edges were gloomily trailed asunder. From out of this fissure the lightning for one instant streamed blindingly. There was one deafening burst, which made the foundations of the house tremble and shake, and then came a sudden hush. Nature stood appalled. I touched the girl Annie. She had fainted.

* * * *

In this way spring passed, and summer wore away. I could note but little change in Miss V——; at any rate, none that was permanent. Some habits of self-control were acquired. More or less of the manual employment which was daily required of her was yielded, but the mental state continued the same. On the whole, perhaps, there were more frequent alternations of melancholy, with that sort of quasi-religious excitement to which I before alluded. I thought, too, that in the autumn the dark shadow on her

mind seemed deepened, while in the early part of the year excitement predominated; as though the breath of that season, which brings temporary death to the vegetable world, also weighed with dispiriting influence on man. I watched Miss V—— with anxiety and lessening hopes. I had no available weapon with which to attack so strange and visionary a delusion as hers.*

I had only heard from her brother once since she had been under my care, and that indirectly through his bankers, to the effect that the North of Italy was then the scene of his wanderings. One day I received a letter in his handwriting: it was brief, and all but illegible; and the information it contained was somewhat disjointed and incoherent. It was dated as to the year, but neither with the month, day, nor place. Mr. V—— stated, that, from inevitable circumstances, it was necessary his sister should immediately rejoin him; that there now no longer

* Whether the morbid appearances after death in similar cases present any marked difference in comparison with patients whose fixed delusions have been of a more physical nature, appears to me to be a subject worthy of future investigation.

existed any reason why they should remain apart, as his own health was more satisfactory. In conclusion, he desired she would hold herself ready to return with him at a minute's warning.

I mused a little; but not seeing what reasonable plea I could offer to detain her under the circumstances, I resolved to wait the issue. Perhaps he might not come after all. I put the letter in my pocket, and walked to Miss V——'s apartment, in order to acquaint her, as far as might be judicious, with its contents. She was in her own room, and, as I approached, I heard her talking to herself in a monotonous key, exhorting, scolding: once I heard something like a laugh—unusual, certainly! I knocked, and entered. She was sitting, with her handkerchief tied round her head, and her chin resting on her hand.

“Well, Miss V——,” I said, cheerfully, “I have some news for you.”

“Ah, doctor,” she replied, rising, “so have I for you.”

“Indeed, then, mine will wait; tell me yours.”

“Ah, yes,” she said, eagerly, “but it must be

in the corridor, lest these walls" (glancing suspiciously round) "should split when they hear it."

Willing to humour her, I assented. She slipped her arm within mine, and walked on at a rapid rate; and then lowering her voice, said, confidentially, "Doctor, you know a doom was over my brother; but it stood still, only moving as he moved, and now it has come on him. He and I are altogether the same now; and the only thing that remains to be done is to join him as speedily as possible; and then, you understand, we shall be bound alike on earth and in hell."

I was confounded.

"How do you know this, Miss V——?"

"Oh! so many years, so many months, so many days, was the message on its way to me, and I knew that the same length would be required for it to reach him. I saw it all last night," she added, mysteriously; "he will soon be here. There is nothing to hinder him now."

I left her without telling her what I had intended; so thoroughly was I taken aback by this singular coincidence. By what means could

she have received her information? Excepting myself, no one had glanced at the letter; nay, it had never left my pocket.

Mr. V—— arrived within twenty-four hours. Brother and sister met, almost without greeting. They asked neither question nor explanation of each other, and watched in perfect silence the preparations for their departure. No mention was made of their destination. They entered the chariot, and it bore them away. I never saw either of them more.

Some years after this, a very old friend of mine, returning from a long residence in Italy, called unexpectedly on me. My heart warmed to see him again, as one's heart does warm to see old, kind, familiar faces. I pressed him to stay the night; and after dinner—my wife had left the room—we peeled our walnuts, and chatted lazily on things long passed, and of his travels.

“One thing,” he said, “I saw in Rome that made a deep impression on me. A young man, a countryman of mine, and of a noble family,

took the vows of a very severe order. There was a good deal of gossip about it among the English, I recollect, at the time; it being said that the holy Mother Church would reap no doubtful advantages from the lands and possessions of her newly-acquired son. A large multitude witnessed the ceremony: there were lights and incense, priests and music, and all the rest of those things, you know, Paul, where-with the Church adorns her victims for the sacrifice. What the young man's feelings were I cannot say, but he looked more dead than alive: his face, though of almost sculptural beauty, was rigid and ghastly, and wore an expression of white despair."

He paused. Then proceeded:

"By the way, I had nearly forgotten to tell you: his sister had professed exactly a year before, and had gained quite a fame. Some said she was mad, others called her inspired; but the poor people flocked to her, believing she wrought miracles. They used to call her 'La Perdita,' on account of her terming her-

self 'the lost one,' and of her never-ending reproaches and self-accusations concerning some unknown and desperate offence against God. For a small gratuity I was allowed to witness one of these miracles, and I beheld the far-famed 'religieuse.' She was talking in an incoherent and highly-excited strain. She must once have been beautiful. But what a wreck her face was! Not that which rains and wind, time and decay, leave behind them: it more resembled the shell of some fair castle blackened by fire. Her cheeks were emaciated and fallen in, and the unmistakable glare of insanity was in the eye. But I recognized the face the instant I saw it, Paul; it was your old patient, Miss V——."

THE END.



